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HOME PLAYS

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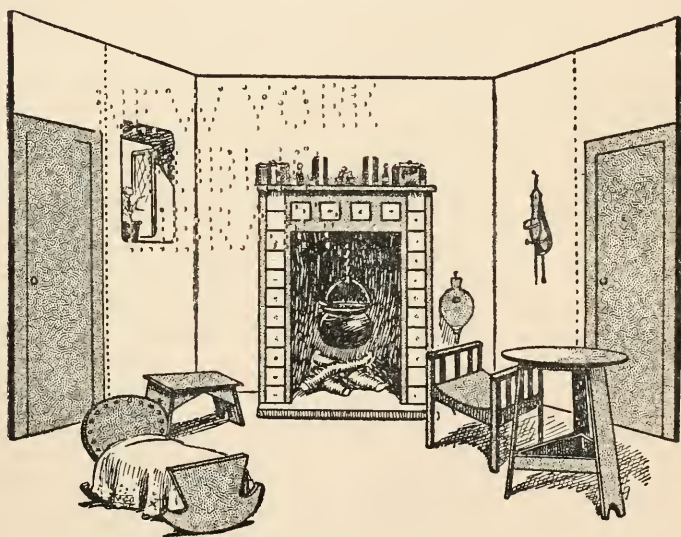
HOME PLAYS

A COLLECTION OF NEW, SIMPLE,
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FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

BY VARIOUS LIVING WRITERS
WITH PLAIN INSTRUCTIONS FOR
COSTUMES, SCENERY, &c.

Edited by CECIL H. BULLIVANT

AUTHOR OF "HOME FUN," ETC.



LONDON: T. C. & E. C. JACK
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1911

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THE
LITTLE
MERMAID

INTRODUCTORY INSTRUCTIONS

THE STAGE

THE construction of a home-made stage and scenery necessitates a certain amount of care and forethought. The idea that "anything will do" must, from the very outset, be banished from the manager's mind, and every detail, however small and trivial it may seem, must be attended to with the greatest care if any degree of success be expected. The possibility of producing beautiful effects and realistic surroundings depends, of course, to a very large degree upon the accommodation available and the expense devoted to the purpose, but it should be clearly understood that practically any play can be produced on the most unpretentious and simple stage.

The simplest of all stage arrangements is undoubtedly that where a double drawing-room is available. The folding-doors obviate the use of a curtain, whilst that half of the room which is to be devoted to the stage can be divested of furniture and fitted up properly without upsetting the whole household.

The erection is, after all, a very simple matter, and can be easily accomplished by any handy members of the house without the assistance of a carpenter. A number of benches—needless to say of equal heights—should be placed along the walls, and planks placed across them to form a floor. These may be nailed into place to keep them secure, although this should be done carefully to avoid doing any serious damage to the forms.

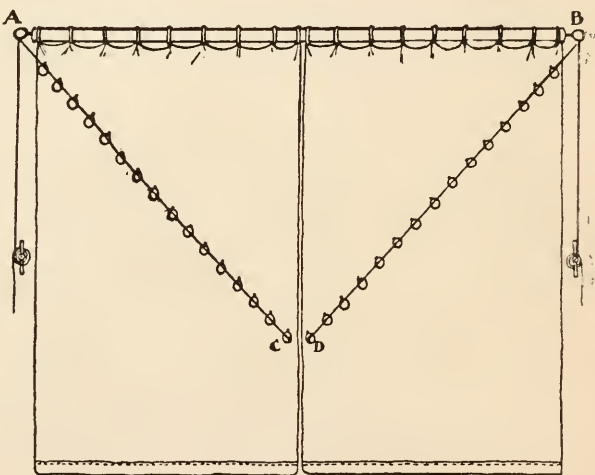


FIG. 1

THE CURTAIN

The construction of a drop-curtain can be a very simple affair. A stout bamboo rod, of sufficient length to stretch from side to side of the room, should have a large eye fastened to either end, as shown in A, B, Fig. 1. A couple of hooks screwed into the walls will serve to keep this rod in place. Two pieces of some opaque material, such as dark cretonne, will serve for the curtain, having rings sewn to the

upper edge and threaded to the pole. At the points C and D small brass rings are sewn inside the curtain, being continued to the upper corners, as shown in the illustration. The bottom of the curtain should be weighted with shot. When the curtain has been hung from the pole, cords must be fastened at C and D, and threaded up through the brass rings, as shown in the figure, being passed through the eyes at the ends of the poles and allowed to hang within easy reach of the inside of the stage.

THE FOOTLIGHTS

For the effective illumination of the stage footlights are essential, and can be arranged with little difficulty. The best footlights are those formed by small lamps with reflectors which, placed at regular intervals about two feet apart, throw a strong and even light upon the stage. Other lamps placed within the wings and concealed from the audience will serve as additional lights. Electricity is, of course, a great boon to stage-managers, but gas can be used as a substitute where the latter is conveniently placed. A long gas barrel pierced with holes one foot apart may be laid right across the front of the stage, and attached to the main pipes by rubber tubing. Incandescent burners placed on these holes will give a magnificent light which, by the suitable arrangement of a tap within the wings, can be raised or lowered at will.

SCENERY

To produce even a small play with all the scenic effects that are such prominent features of the large theatres would involve a cost far greater than any amateur would think of devoting to the purpose. A drawing-room representation, however, can be given with a comparatively small outlay, and the scenery, especially where the services of an artistic friend are obtainable, can be correctly and nicely produced.

The simplest scenery is that of interiors, as the difficulties of landscape-painting are therein escaped. Interiors, moreover, are usually produced with a box-scene, which is practically a room constructed on the stage, as shown in Fig. 2. As the "flats" or separate pieces of this scenery are very important, a detailed description may well be given of how the different kinds are made.

FLATS

Flats are composed of a light wooden framework, over which canvas or brown paper is stretched tightly. The height and width of the flats must of course be regulated by the dimensions of the stage, and it will be as well to chalk out a ground-plan somewhat similar to that shown in Fig. 2.

As flats for interiors are usually made in certain types which are adapted according to the exigences of the piece, the following explanation will serve to show how these types can be constructed.

Straight or Plain Flat.—This is a simple rectangular framework after the pattern depicted in Fig. 3, and is made of $2\frac{1}{2}$ -in. battening. A single cross-piece, AB, serves to keep it stiff, whilst the small stays at the angles, CCCC, strengthen the corners and prevent them from straining. The lengths of battening must be fastened together with a half-joint, illustrated at D. The canvas or brown paper is stretched tightly

over the framework, and having been tacked or glued to the edges, must be covered with a coat of size to ensure its drying perfectly taut. Both sides of the flat may be covered in this manner.

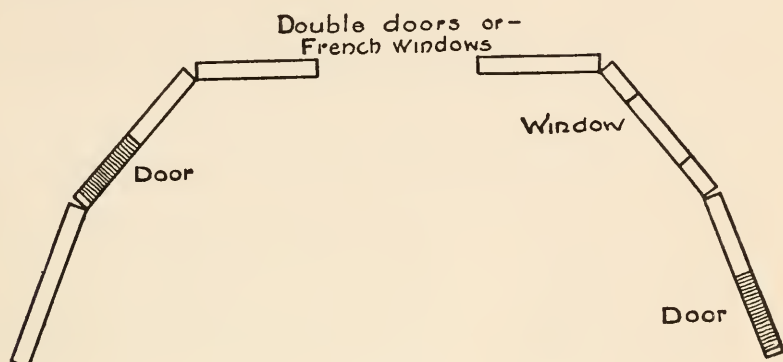


FIG. 2

Window Flat.—The type of flat used for windows is illustrated in Fig. 4, which shows a workable window hinged to the framework at AA. In theatrical parlance,

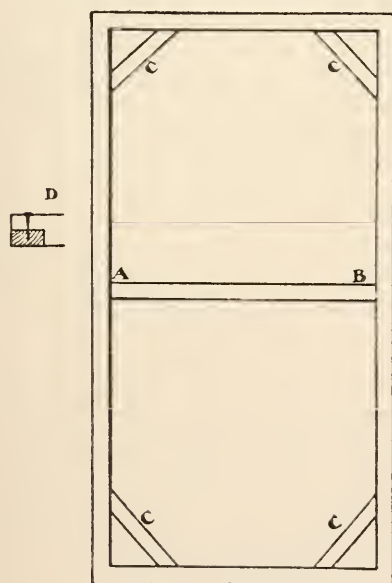


FIG. 3

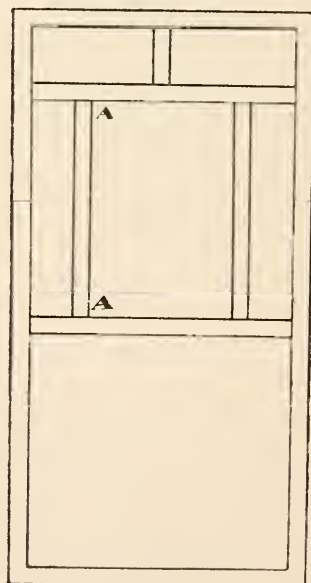


FIG. 4

doors and windows which are made to work—*i.e.* open and shut in a natural way—are called “practicable.”

Door Flat.—This is very similar to the window flat, as can be seen from a glance at Fig. 5. The door itself should be made of battening and hinged to the frame-

work with reversible hinges, whilst pieces of wood should be fastened at A to furnish strength for the door-handle.

Double Doors.—The flat containing double doors, Fig. 6, is the most useful of all the flats. It is merely an adaptation of the door flat, but is almost double the size. The utility of the double flat can scarcely be overestimated—it may serve for the embrasure of a window, as the partition between two rooms, as a large chimney-corner fireplace, or as the French windows leading out into a garden.

The flats for outdoor scenery are made in exactly the same manner as those already described for indoor effects. Tree wings are usually put together according to the design shown in Figs. 7 and 8. The projecting foliage, A, in the former of

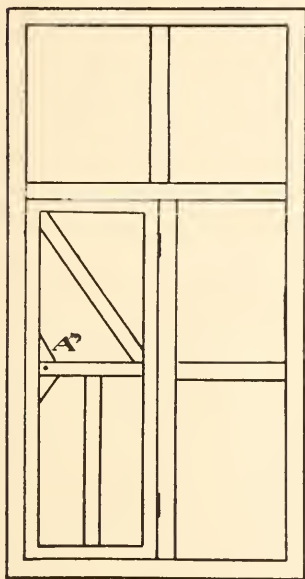


FIG. 5

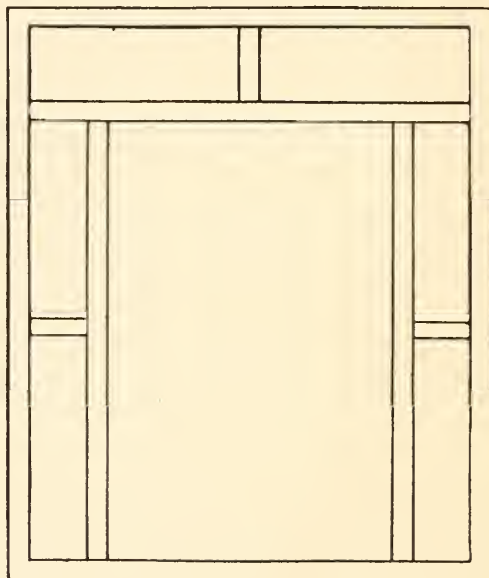


FIG. 6

these illustrations, is made of thick cardboard fastened to the flat with stays; it is then given a coating of size and painted to resemble leaves and branches. Those portions within the dotted lines are coloured to represent whatever portion of the back-cloth may be behind in order to heighten the effect of the tree-trunk. The flat shown in Fig. 8 is very narrow, and the entire outline of the tree is made in cardboard, or cut with a fret-saw from some thin wood. Although entailing very much more labour, wings made on the latter plan are very much more effective.

The framework of the flats should be covered with canvas or brown paper cut into pieces of the required size and glued or nailed to the woodwork, spaces being left, of course, for the doors and windows. The paper for flats made to represent the walls of a room can be easily procured from any paperhanger, and should be carefully smoothed and arranged that the pattern on the different widths meets correctly. A quantity of architrave will be required to go round the doorways and windows, where

it will serve to conceal the edges of the paper, at the same time adding considerably to the finished effect.

Flats are fastened together end to end by pieces of bent zinc and screws, whilst they are secured to the ground with angle irons. Large scenery requires props and stays to keep it in position.

SCENE-PAINTING

The back of the stage in all outdoor scenes is covered with a cloth, upon which is painted a landscape suitable to the play being performed. As the beauty of the piece depends to a large extent upon the setting, it need scarcely be said that a certain amount of artistic taste and skill is necessary to produce an effective "cloth."

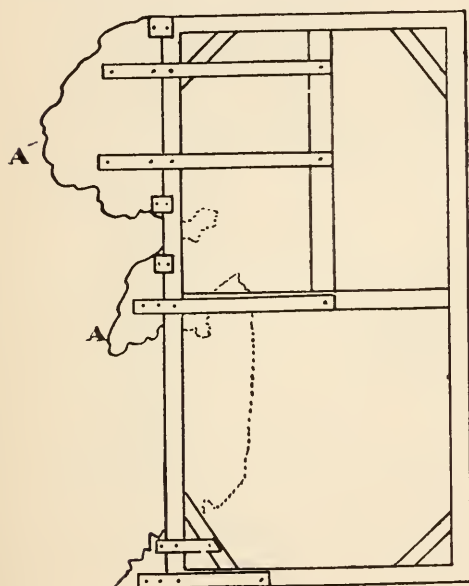


FIG. 7

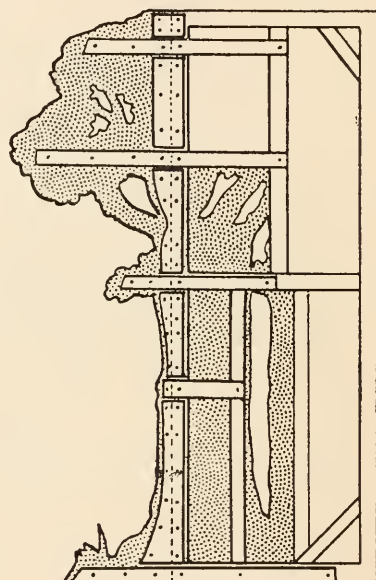


FIG. 8

The back-cloth is stretched between two rollers, which can be made of stout curtain-poles, long enough to extend right across the back of the stage. The top pole should be high enough to be invisible to the audience, the lower pole will lie upon the stage, and may require several weights to keep it in place. Lengths of unbleached calico, costing about $4\frac{3}{4}$ d. per yard, must be stretched between these poles, and tacked together in order to form a large sheet upon which the scene can be painted. The lengths, which are usually from 28 in. to 30 in. wide, must be oversewn, so that a perfectly even surface is presented to the front.

When it is well stretched between the two poles, a coating of size and whiting, mixed to a medium consistency, must be evenly applied to the cloth and allowed to dry thoroughly. The outline of the scenery can then be lightly charcoaled on the prepared surface.

The colours required for scene-painting must be bright, and should include:—

yellow ochre, bright green, vermilion, crimson, chrome yellow, brown umber, ultramarine blue, and lamp-black—all of which can be bought in powdered form for a few pence. A large supply of whiting must also be kept handy, for the bodies of the various colours are compounded of this material, since the powder colours contain no bodies in themselves.

A large board—the top of a packing-case, for instance—will be needed for a pallet, and an ordinary painter's outfit of brushes in different sizes will serve for the work. The colours mostly required, such as the blue for the sky, or the green for grass, should be mixed in fairly large quantities and placed in separate basins or pie-

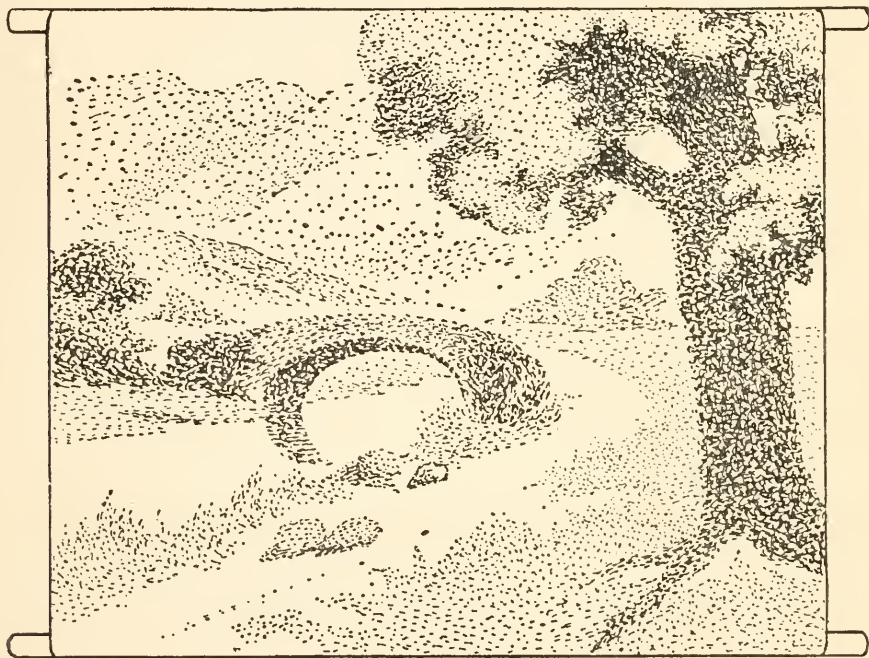


FIG. 9

dishes, a large bowl of warm size being kept ready for use. Into each bowl enough size and whiting should be mixed to make a body of the consistency of whitewash.

When all the paints are ready, the larger surfaces in one colour may be painted in roughly, as shown in Fig. 9, the finishing touches being left to the last, when the whole scene may be toned into harmony. This should be done at night, when the colours can be gauged better, for only experienced scene-painters can judge the effects of their work by artificial light. Allow one colour to dry before working on another tint; if this precaution be neglected the colour will present a muddy appearance. The darker tones should always be painted in first, and the lighter colours worked in on the top of them.

Behind the curtain, and stretching from the top of the front wing on one side to that of the corresponding one on the other, should be a strip of cloth, which in rural

scenery may be painted to represent the interlacing boughs of trees. This cloth must be mounted upon a framework similar to that illustrated in Fig. 10, which should be hung from the ceiling. For scenes other than rural a piece of plain cloth, Fig. 11, can be hung from a piece of wood.

MAKE-UP

A few general remarks on the question of make-up will greatly simplify the instructions given in connection with each play. Those who have never been on the

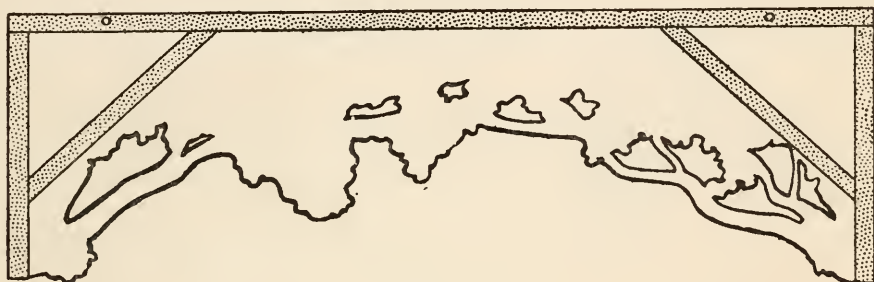


FIG. 10

stage may be surprised to learn that the natural face looks most unsightly in the glare of the footlights, and that some kind of make-up is absolutely essential. On the other hand, a bad make-up makes a most disastrous effect, and presents a painful or a ludicrous appearance.

Complexions are usually made up with grease-paint, No. 2½, although deeper

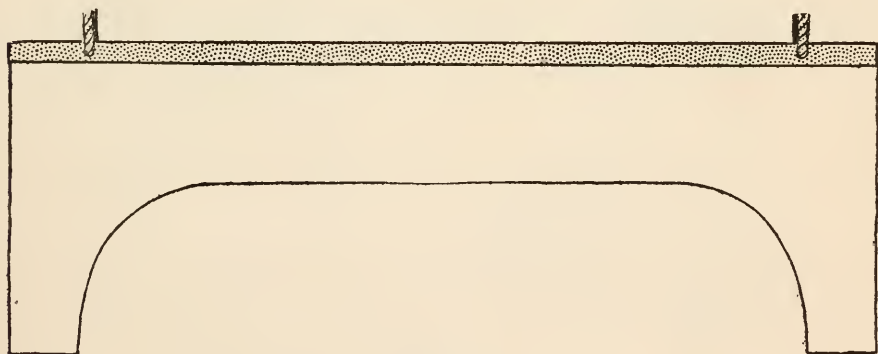


FIG. 11

colours numbered 3 and 4 can also be used if desired for elderly make-up. The face should be covered by a foundation of wig-paste before any attempt is made to paint or do any lining. This foundation must be very thoroughly applied, and rubbed into every crease and fold in the flesh, forehead, cheek, and chin; but in a small room this is not necessary. Vaseline and powder make a substitute.

Features are rendered more prominent by what are known as "high-lights," which are produced by applying paint of a lighter shade than the grease to those features

which are to be treated. An example of this is given in Fig. 12, which depicts the effect of high-lights upon the nose and cheeks.

Exactly the contrary effect is produced by the making of low-lights, which are made by placing a darker colour, with the effect of producing sunken cheeks, as shown in Fig. 13, done with brown or blue powder applied with a hare's-foot.



FIG. 12

The treatment of the eyes necessitates very careful work. Where the lashes are required darker, black grease-paint should be applied very neatly, the utmost care being taken to avoid any portion going into the eye.

Grease-paint "liners" are necessary for darkening or lightening the eyebrows, but in cases where the actor possesses very scant brows, a little crêpe hair, affixed with the aid of spirit-gum, will be required to produce the desired effect.

Deep red lips are produced with the help of "lip salve," and in some cases with grease-paint.

A middle-aged appearance in a man can usually be produced by the aid of whiskers, beard, or moustache. For a female part a little judicious lining and dressing of the hair will be sufficient. Wigs of all descriptions can be hired from all theatrical dealers, the measurements being taken according to the key illustrated in Fig. 14.

Ordinary wigs for countrymen, comic characters, and people of a dishevelled



FIG. 13

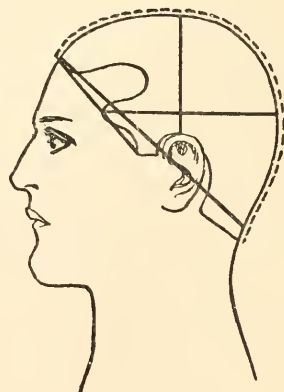


FIG. 14

appearance are termed "scratch wigs." There are other technical terms, but no difficulty should be experienced in finding wigs suitable for any character. In choosing wigs with bald foreheads it is always better to get those made of silk, as this material fits more tightly across the forehead and makes a better join.

In the cases of parts for old women, it is usual to make them wear caps with two pieces of hair sewn on to a strip of this flesh-coloured silk, this obviating the use of a

wig. Girls acting boys' parts must wear special wigs, arranged to allow of the packing of the hair; but even this is impossible in the cases of actresses possessing a great quantity of hair.

Wigs cost from 3s. upwards, but not less than 10s. should be paid for a good serviceable article. Except in very especial cases there is no need to buy wigs for white or grey hair—a good quantity of powder placed upon the head will be amply sufficient to produce the effect required.

With one or two useful hints this introductory chapter can now be closed. After the face has been made up with grease-paint, it should be powdered, as this will prevent the shine of the grease being noticeable to the spectators, and at the same time will give the skin a natural appearance.

Make-up can be removed by the application of cocoa-nut butter or vaseline, the former being sold in sticks ready for use. The face should be thoroughly covered with this material, which can be rubbed into every line and crease with the fingers. By passing a fairly rough towel over the face the whole of the make-up can then be wiped off so perfectly that not a trace of paint or powder remains.

All the scenery described has been based upon that actually used in the presentation of plays in theatres. For hasty and inexpensive productions at home, however, a number of makeshifts can be employed, whereby flat-making and scene-painting will be entirely obviated. The following suggestions as to how this may be arranged will, it is hoped, prove of service to those who for any reason are unable to employ proper scenery.

Curtains draped back artistically on either side of the stage will always serve for wings, and with a little care can be used in place of the drop-curtain.

Outdoor scenery can be arranged by hanging a large white sheet from the ceiling to the floor. To represent fields, green paper can be pasted or pinned to this sheet, the horizon being formed of purple paper cut with an irregular outline to represent the distant hills. Branches from the garden fastened into wooden blocks and placed on the ground will answer the purpose of trees, whilst hedges and banks can be constructed after a similar fashion.

For sea-scenery, blue paper may be pinned on the white sheet to the approximate height of the horizon. Hassocks and boxes covered with brown cloth and piled at the base of the sheet will give the appearance of sea-worn rocks.

Interiors are rather more simple to arrange. If a window be required, it may be cut of white paper, with the beading or lead work painted on to represent the panes of glass. Curtains should then be draped at the top and sides of this window, and a strip of wood nailed in place for the sill. A similar contrivance can be employed for the door; in this case the paper being grained and painted in panels, whilst a door-handle is tacked into the wall behind. Screens are also useful for doors, and can, of course, be used extensively to conceal the actors and others behind the wings.

HOME PLAYS

THE MUSHROOM MEADOW

By CATHERINE A. MORIN

As there is only one act in this play, the scenic arrangements can be very simply effected. The back-cloth may be painted to represent a green meadow in which is a small pond. At some distance to the left is an old farmhouse standing amongst

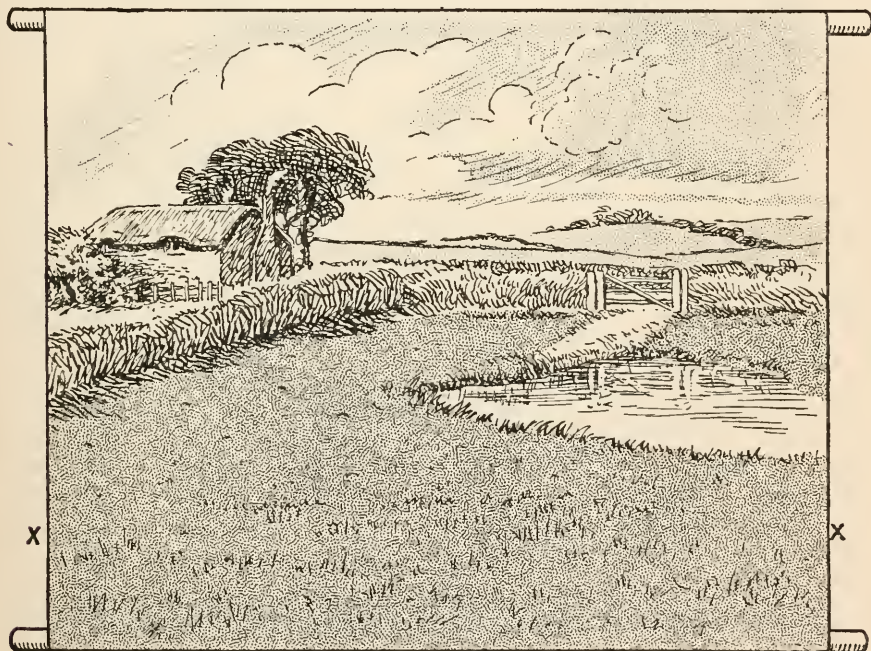


FIG. 1

the trees, whilst the fields stretch away to the distant horizon among knolls of oak and beech trees, Fig. 1.

Scenery such as the above would make a very pretty background for the setting of "The Mushroom Meadow." Upon either wing, trees, similar to those shown in Fig. 2, should be placed. These trees can be made of flats, to which cardboard

foliage, as at A, B, and C, has been tacked. The trunks must, of course, be suitably painted in such a manner that this projecting foliage merges into leaves depicted on the canvas.

An easier though less effective method of representing the leaves and branches

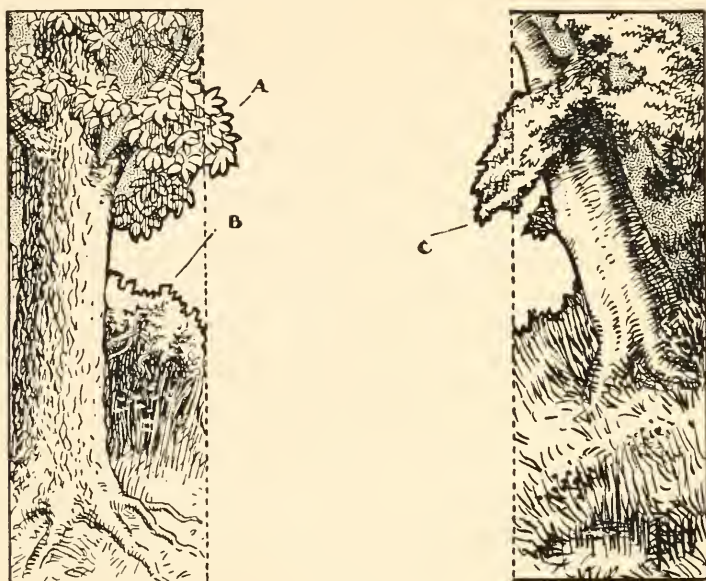


FIG. 2

is to paint the necessary foliage on the flat, making the background, between the foliage, exactly match the cloth behind. The shape of such a flat is shown

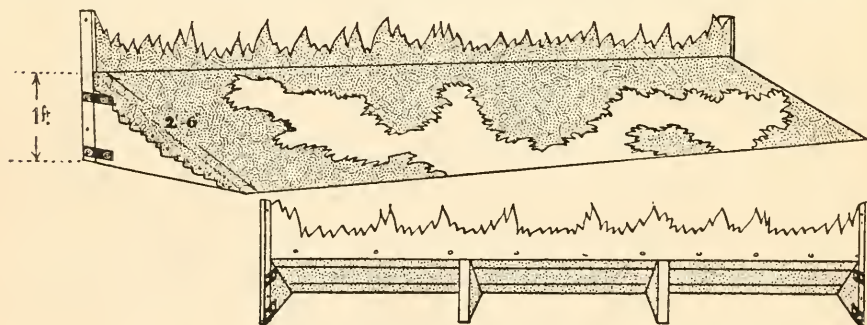


FIG. 3

in the dotted lines in Fig. 2, but, as will be at once apparent, this device cannot be looked upon as successful.

In front of the back-cloth it will be necessary to make a bank similar to that shown in Fig. 3; the height being 1 ft., and the length of the slope about 2 ft. 6 in. As this bank will have to stretch right across the stage, it will be

necessary to support it upon struts, a back view of which is seen in the illustration. The planking having been laid down and nailed to the slope, it must be covered with canvas painted to represent tufts of grass, with here and there a patch of earth. Stout cardboard should be nailed along the upper edge of the slope

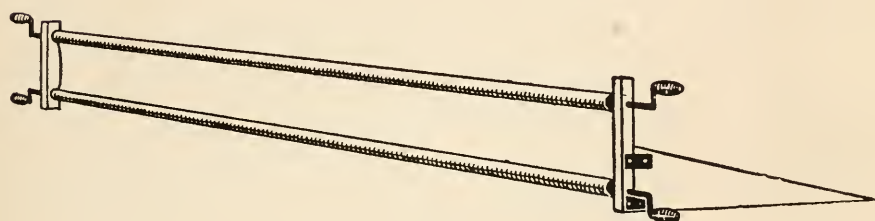
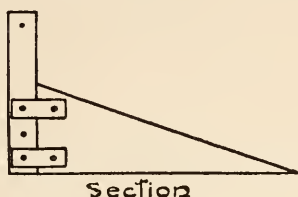


FIG. 4

and cut to resemble coarse grass and bennets, the lowest dip in the grass, shown at B, Fig. 5, being not less than 3 in., and the highest tuft, C, at least 12 in. above the edge of the slope. When placed in position this bank will reach to about the places marked X X on the back-cloth, Fig. 1.

As, during the course of the play, the mushrooms must appear to grow, the following device will be found very effective to accomplish this deception. The



FIG. 5

supports at each end of the slope should be carried up about 12 in., having between them two rollers—light curtain poles, for example—long enough to stretch the whole length of the bank, with handles fastened to each end, as shown in Fig. 4. Over these rollers plain green canvas is stretched in such a manner that when the handles are turned the canvas is rolled up in the same manner as a blind, Fig. 5. The top roller will be on a level with the tops of the cardboard tufts of grass. Now, if a number of mushrooms be painted upon one portion of this canvas strip, Fig. 5, it will be found that when the upper handles are turned

from the wings, the mushrooms will be moved upwards and, first appearing amongst the tufts of grass, will slowly rise as though in the act of growing.

Twilight and sunset effects will depend very much upon the arrangement of the footlights. If these can be raised or lowered, no difficulty at all will be experienced ; on the other hand, if it be impossible to do this, the time of day will have to be left chiefly to the imagination. In any case, the action of the play is sufficient to apprise the audience that night is about to fall.



COSTUMES

The Swifts and the Churn Owl.—Little difficulty need be experienced in arranging the costumes of the birds and beasts which appear in this play. The birds should be dressed in black frocks reaching to the knees. Black shoes and stockings and black-dress will also be necessary. The arrangement of the head-dress to represent the head and beak of the bird needs some care. An ordinary round "bowler" hat should have the brims cut off, as in Fig. 6. To this a beak, cut from cardboard, and shaped as shown in the figure, being bent at the dotted line, should be glued at A, B—a slight piece having previously been cut from the hat. Upon either side round eyes

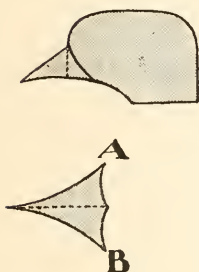


FIG. 6

made of white cardboard with black beads should be placed in position ; the addition of a piece of black cloth falling from the hat down the back will conceal the neck. If procurable, long feathers may be attached to this piece of cloth, Fig. 7, although they are not necessary. Cardboard wings can be added if desired, but it should be remembered that these are apt to become cumbersome and will probably impede the motions of the actresses. They can, however, be omitted with advantage.

The Bats.—These animals will be represented by a costume of dark brown, the frocks or tunics being similar in shape to those used by the Swifts. A brown skull-cap, to which are attached pointed cardboard ears, should be fitted tightly over the head, whilst long brown scarves sewn to the side of the tunic and fastened with elastic or tape around the wrist will serve for wings. When the arms are flourished about the head, these imitation wings are very realistic.

The Cockchafer.—A dark brown tunic will be the best garment in which to represent this beetle. A couple of large antennæ will serve to distinguish him from the others above described. The head should be covered with a close brown cap, in which a couple of large eyes may be fastened.

Will-o'-the-Wisp.—A costume suggestive of marsh lights should be adopted for this character—any electric blue tunic or smock, glittering here and there with sequins, will answer the purpose admirably.



FIG. 7

The Fairy.—The fairy should be dressed in the conventional green tunic and red cap of the magic little people. His legs may be encased in black stockings with black or red shoes upon his feet. The red cap should be adorned with a branch of fern frond, suggestive of the magic properties of fern seed. A small bag or pouch slung across the shoulders will prove a handy receptacle for some of this magic seed, which the fairy may at times appear to throw broadcast.

Mushroom Fairies.—A really effective costume can be prepared for the mushroom fairies with very little trouble. Large mushroom hats—white outside and lined with brown—a green frock stretching to about the knees, white shoes and stockings and bare arms will complete the main outlines of the figure. Upon the green dress should be painted white mushrooms after the manner shown in Fig. 8, whilst at the end of the short sleeves and at the bottom of the frock bunches of green ribbon may be sewn. Thus attired the mushroom fairies will present a very realistic appearance.

True-Child, Nurse, and Mushroom-gatherers.—These characters should wear everyday clothing—the child in a costume suitable to the age of seven or thereabouts, the nurse in old-fashioned dress, and the mushroom-gatherers as country boys and girls.

The various screams and cries made by the birds and bats must be copied as far as possible from nature. Penny toys to imitate birds' cries can often be purchased, whilst the bats need do little more than squeak shrilly.

It may be of interest to note that on St. John's Eve, *i.e.* Midsummer Eve, the fairies hold their revels, and fearless mortals who know where to look may see the little folk at their sport. May Eve, Midsummer Eve, and November Eve are the three great feasts in the fairy calendar.



FIG. 8

THE MUSHROOM MEADOW

"Come away, O human child !
To the woods and waters wild,
With a fairy hand in hand,
For the world is more full of weeping than you can understand."

W. B. YEATS : *The Stolen Child*.

CHARACTERS.

SWIFTS.

1ST BAT.

2ND BAT.

3RD BAT.

4TH BAT.

CHURN OWL.

COCKCHAFER.

FAIRY.

WILL-O'-THE-WISP.

MUSHROOM FAIRIES.

TRUE-CHILD.

NURSE.

MUSHROOM-GATHERERS.

SCENE.—*A damp green meadow shaded with trees ; in the centre is a small pond, and pastoral wooded country stretches away in the distance.*

TIME.—*St. John's Eve.*

Enter flight of SWIFTS, screaming and shrieking as they fly round catching insects.

Swifts. Quicker ! quicker ! Catch them ! catch them !

Evening now comes on apace :

Make haste there !

Up in the air !

There's another ! Catch them ! catch them !

After it ! Now for a race !

Skree—eee—eee—ee !

Out of my way !

Head over heel !

Here's a bat—look !

Dance and wheel.

Fly ! fly !

To the sky ;

Skree—eee—eee—ee !

Pursue ! pursue ! while daylight last ;

The golden sun is sinking fast.

(*Separately.*) Away !

Away !

Away !

Away !

(*Together.*) Now slowly dies the summer day.

(*Separately.*) A race !

A race !

A race !

A race !

(*Together.*) The evening now comes on apace !

[*Exeunt SWIFTS, screaming. The sun slowly sinks, a glow shines over everything ; shadows lengthen, twilight creeps on.*

Enter BATS and flutter round.

1st Bat. Now those noisy creatures are gone. What a screaming they make !

2nd Bat. Noisy ! I should think so ; they would keep the whole world awake !

3rd Bat. To-night is St. John's Eve ! How peaceful the hour ; how calm !

4th Bat. A long, lingering time of twilight, and the air sweet as balm!

[A CHURN OWL is heard in the distance.

1st Bat. (*grumblingly*). He's noisy too. I wish he'd learn at least to modify his churn.

2nd Bat. Our voices are so high and clear, 'tis said not even men can hear.

3rd Bat. Truly the darksome night is ours, the calm and quiet night.

4th Bat. Why should men say, "blind as a bat," when keenest is our sight in dark?

1st Bat. Let us call! Call at once, brothers! Call on the signal! Now—hark!

[BATS utter a thin, high, piercing cry that seems to sound very far off. Churring sound grows nearer.

Enter CHURN OWL, with wide-spread wings and gaping beak; he flies over mushroom meadow and calls out.

C. Owl. How are you growing down there, you little ones, all in the dark?

[Chorus of tiny voices from underground.

We grow! we grow!
Down here below!
We rise to-night,
By clear moonlight.

[COCKCHAFER booms through the air, and blunders against a Bat.

Cock. Now then, what's that,
You old blind bat!

I've escaped the Swifts! A race
I've had this eve!

Bat. (*indignantly*).

You're blind, I say,
Booming away!

I know you for a blunderer by your leave.

[COCKCHAFER settles on ground.

C. Owl. No quarrelling, friends,
let us have twilight and peace

This lingering day, ere the dark
nights increase.

This is the night fairies should hold
their revels,

Here in this mushroom meadow,
yonder in woodland and park—

Churr! churr! churr—rrr!

How are you growing down
there, you little ones, all in
the dark?

[Twilight deepens, thin mists arise.
Will-o'-the-Wisp (*beginning to dance over the marsh at the bottom of meadow*).

Up and down, up and down,
Every one I lead astray;

King or beggar, knave or clown,
Come this way! come this way!

[Nobody takes any notice; he plays up and down, and sings his song at intervals.

Enter FAIRY, yawning.

Fairy. St. John's Eve,

So it is,

Yet no one's here.

Now men no more believe

In fairies,

That is clear.

Yet mortals all have power to-night,

If only they could use it right.

C. Owl. Where are the children gone?

Surely they've not grown wise !

Where is the light that shone

Ever in True-Child's eyes ?

Fairy (peevishly). Oh, children are grown up, all,

But sadly changed for the worse.

They call their *parties* a ball !

Have maids instead of a nurse.

1st Bat. Too clever by half, I call them.

2nd Bat. Dictate to their own Mama !

3rd Bat. Want ev'rything in creation !

4th Bat. And motors to drive like Papa !

Bats (all together). Poor fairies !
poor children ! poor fairies !

Now which is the poorest, who'll say :

The children who've done with the fairies,

Or the fairies they're driving away ?

C. Owl. Believe me, friends, you're all quite wrong !

Now listen to the Fairy Song,

[A Voice sings.]

Voice. Do you wonder where the fairies are,

Those forms so dear, so cherish'd ?

They are very near, yet very far,

And neither dead nor vanish'd.

They live in the same green world to-day

As in bygone ages olden ;

And you enter in by the ancient way,

Through an ivory gate and golden.

[BATS continue to flutter round during the song. CHURN OWL churns softly, COCK-CHAFER flaps his wings, the FAIRY slips behind a leaf.]

Enter TRUE-CHILD. He is fair of face, with large, clear, shining eyes ; he wanders round as if in search of something.

Will - o' - the - Wisp (dancing more vigorously and singing his song).

Up and down, up and down,

Every one I lead astray ;

King or beggar, knave or clown,

Come this way ! come this way !

True-Child (standing still). Oh yes ! I'm sure this is the place ;

'Twas here I saw the fairy-ring.

It is St. John's Eve, and Nurse says

Fairies to-night hold revelling !

I want to see the mushrooms grow !

I know they're somewhere down below.

[TRUE-CHILD kneels down and lays his ear against the ground.]

Ah, now ! I think I hear a sound,

It seems to come from underground.

Yes ! yes ! 'tis true, I hear them grow.

Oh, Nurse was right, she told me so ;

I need but look, and just believe
I'd see them growing on St. John's Eve.

[Voices singing in the distance.]

"Come away, O human child !

To the woods and waters wild,
With a fairy hand in hand,
For the world is more full of
weeping than you can under-
stand."

True-Child (listens and claps his hands). Fairies dear, oh, fairies dear, come quick and take my hand!

I hear your voices already—take me to fairyland!

Bats, C. Owl, Cockchafer, Fairy (all together). He does believe in fairies!

You heard him call;
Perhaps he is the True-Child after all!

Fairy. Let's question him—we'd best not act in haste;

To show ourselves for nothing were a waste.

[CHURN OWL *alights near* TRUE-CHILD, BATS *flutter near him; he sees them, but not the* FAIRY.

True-Child (with delight). You dear, I heard you churring from afar,

And Nurse said, "Listen, 'tis the lone Night-jar!"

C. Owl (severely). Why out of bed so late, we'd like to know?

True-Child (clapping his hands). You talk!

What fun!—to see the mushrooms grow;

They come so quickly in a night—one might,

You know!

Fairy (coming forward).

One might of course!

That all depends.

My friends,

We'll put him to the test.

Your judgment I'll endorse,

To me leave all the rest.

All the Others (together). Agreed! agreed!

Then throw the magic seed!¹

True-Child (boldly). Well, you're a fairy, anyhow, that I can see!

The Others (aside). He can see, so much to the good!

Fairy. Attend to me.

Now tell me, Child, do you love your Mother?

True-Child (conclusively). What a silly question! Ask me another!

Fairy. "Silly," you think? Do you heed your Nurse,

Or think yourself wiser, or something worse?

True-Child (hanging his head). I'm afraid sometimes I'm not *always* good,

[*More slowly and with evident shame.*

And at times in the corner I've been stood.

The Others (interrupting with enthusiasm). Hurrah! hurrah! three cheers for that!

[TRUE-CHILD *looks up much relieved, and smiles.*

Fairy. Now tell me, do you tease your cat?

True-Child. I dressed her once in a coat and hat,

¹ Fern seed possessed of magical properties. A mortal in possession of fern seed is enabled to see the fairies. (It does not exist.)

But truly the buttons were not tight ;

Yet Nurse told me it was not right,
That it was cruel—it did not seem ;

So then I kiss'd her, and gave her cream.

Bats. Quite right ! We will pass the coat and hat.

With cream and kissing she'll soon grow fat.

Fairy. Now, Child, attend ! Get your answer pat.

[*TRUE-CHILD stands to attention with heels together, hands behind, and nods at intervals.*

Do you like to play ? Would you rather sing

Than cry ? Are you happy with anything ?

Can you read ? Can you write ?

Can you work a sum ?

Can you say your tables

Without looking glum ?

Do you love mud-pies and plenty of jam ?

Do you hate stiff collars ? Do you ever cram

Your mouth too full ? Do you talk while you eat,

Or ever run hatless into the street ?

Do you love the postman, the policeman, the gardener ?

And when Nurse whips, do you kiss her and pardon her ?

True-Child (interrupting). She doesn't whip *ever*, but once she *smacked* !

I was naughty that day, the window I cracked.

But we made it up, all comfy and nice,

And she never, never has smacked me twice ;

And then she let me go and tell Mother.

C. Owl (with decision). We'll pass that too, as well as the other !

Fairy (slowly). You hear what they say ? Now I've nearly done.

Do you ever ask questions a hundred and one ?

True-Child (smiling). My tongue, Mother says, can never be still !

Fairy (gravely). That's just as I thought—and it never will.

Do you love a story ?

True-Child (eagerly). Oh yes, and some

I like to be funny. But now I've come,

Oh, please, dear Fairy, I've come, you must know,

On this night to see all the mushrooms grow.

Nurse said, if only I'd look and believe,

I might see them growing on St. John's Eve.

All the Others (joyfully). You shall ! you shall ! You shall see them grow !

Keep your eyes open, and look below.

Churr ! churr ! now the test is passed,

And True-Child is come to us at last !

[*BATS and CHURN OWL flutter round, FAIRY opens pouch and throws a handful of fern seed over TRUE-CHILD,*

then takes his hand and points to the ground. Small, round, white things are seen pushing up through the grass of the meadow, which is bright with moonlight ; WILL-O'-THE-WISP is no longer seen.

True-Child (in an awed whisper). They really are growing now, dear little things, So quickly, so quiet, as if they had wings !

Enter MUSHROOM FAIRIES. They join hands and dance in a ring round TRUE-CHILD, who holds out his arms to them in ecstasy.

M. Fairies (singing). "Come away, O human child !

*To the woods and waters wild,
With a fairy hand in hand,
For the world is more full of weeping than you can understand."*

[FAIRIES dance faster and faster ; they catch hold of TRUE-CHILD'S hands ; he is drawn into the ring and dances round with them. WILL-O'-THE-WISP appears again and dances over the marsh. BATS flutter to and fro, while CHURN OWL churrs in the distance. VOICE heard calling from afar.

*Voice. Child, child, where are you ?
Where have you wandered away ?*

[The dance stops abruptly ; the FAIRIES scatter hither and thither and disappear. TRUE-CHILD falls to the ground and

lies still. A cloud hides the moon and it grows dark.

Voice (coming nearer). Weary am I with seeking ! Child, where do you stray ?

Enter NURSE hurriedly, runs up and down in search, calls again.

Child ! Child !

[Catches sight of TRUE-CHILD sleeping on the ground and flies to him.

My precious one ! (giving him a shake).

Here in the damp and cold !

True-Child (opens his eyes, smiling, and flings his arms round her neck, murmurs drowsily). I saw them, Nursie, growing—the mushrooms—as you told !

Nurse (in alarm). Hush, now hush ! What nonsense ! Surely you'll catch your death !

And I searching for you—I'm well-nigh out of breath !

[Hugs him close.

Come, my lamb, with old Nursie ; come in quick to bed.

Sure, I'm afraid he's ill, and wandering in his head.

True-Child (very sleepy). All right, Nursie—I saw them—you said St. John's Eve—

Perhaps I'd see the Fairies—if only I'd believe !

[Falls asleep again in her arms.

Exit NURSE hugging and kissing TRUE-CHILD.

.

[Stillness and silence over the mushroom meadow ; a glimmer of light shows ; a bird

twitters and is answered by another; one flies suddenly out of a bush; the dawn comes slowly. As it grows light it can be seen that the meadow is dotted over with mushrooms.

Enter MUSHROOM-GATHERERS with baskets. One of them calls.

Here they are, a fine crop, quick!
Now, before the sun is up, the
grass with dew still wet,

Betty! Martin! Polly! pick!
Fill a basket! Who'll be first and
see what we can get!

[They disperse laughing and chattering, picking the mushrooms; more birds awaken, twitter and call to each other; the sun rises, a burst of light floods the meadow.]

CURTAIN.

MILKMAIDS¹

BY MAUD MORIN

"MILKMAIDS" takes place amid scenery very similar to that of "The Mushroom Meadow," and the wings and back-cloth described in connection with that play can be utilised for a portion of the one under consideration. For the first scene, however, a back-cloth must be painted to represent a sandy lane winding between green meadows, Fig. 1. On the right is a broken gate leading from the lane into the fields, on the

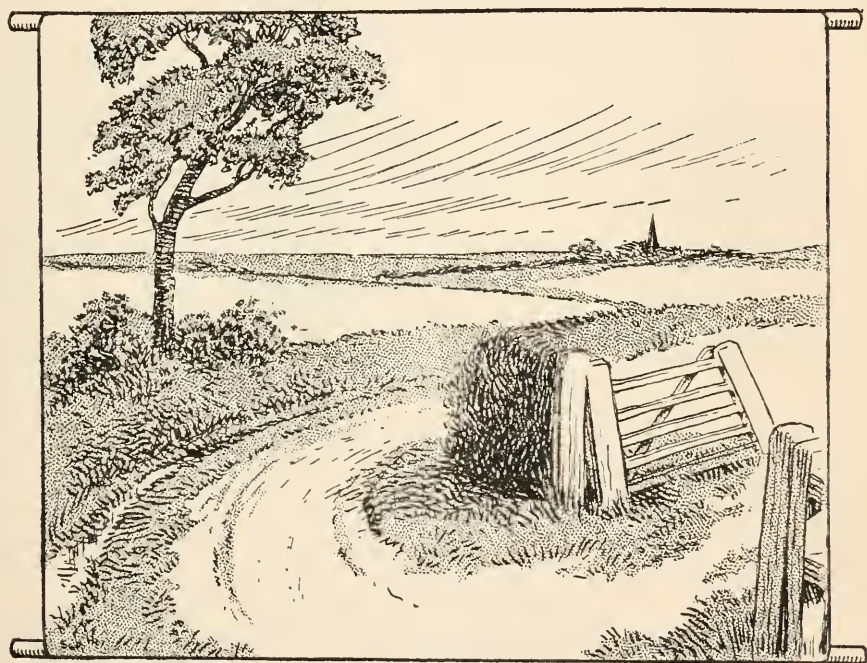


FIG. 1

left is a shady tree, whilst in the distance a neighbouring village spire breaks the line of the horizon.

The two tree wings used in "The Mushroom Meadow" will serve throughout the play. If desired, other trees may of course be constructed, but the general description given in the first play will be amply sufficient to facilitate the making of the wings.

For the second scene the back-cloth and wings described for the former play can be used. There will, however, be no necessity to introduce the bank,

¹ The little Lilac flower called Milkmaid is also known as Cuckoo flower, Lady's Smock.

as that device was solely employed for the purpose of arranging mechanism to make the mushrooms grow.

COSTUMES

Little Bridget.—No special costume will be necessary for the representation of this character, as it should be acted by a little girl in everyday garb.

Jack-in-the-Pulpit.—This part should be played by a boy, an idea of whose fancy costume is given in Fig. 2. It should consist of a green tunic wound about the body to resemble the half-wrapped leaves of a plant. He must wear short green



FIG. 2

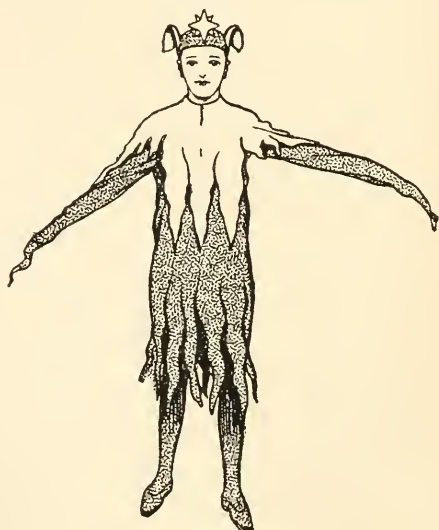


FIG. 3

breeches, to which are sewn green stockings terminating in pointed shoes. A white collar, gloves, and a pointed green cap will complete the costume.

Jack-o'-Lantern.—A very effective costume for this Jack is shown in Fig. 3, and consists of a black overall reaching below the knee, with black sleeves carried to such a length that they cover the hands and end in a point. The feet and legs can be covered with black stockings and black shoes. The overall should be slashed in points round the bottom. The sombreness of the costume must be relieved by a large white cape, the ends of which must be slashed to match the overall. Upon his head will be a very simple cap of black, to which two white ears should be fastened on either side, in the centre being a white star, as shown in the illustration.

The Frog.—Some care will have to be exercised in making the costume worn by the Frog. The body should consist of a large garment, Fig. 4, fastened down the back with hooks and eyes or patent stud-fasteners. This garment should naturally be of a light green colour, the back being marked in imitation of the striping on

a frog, whilst the front is of a rich yellow tint, and must be padded out with a substantial pillow or cushion. Gloves in imitation of a frog's forefeet may be worn over the hands, and shoes of a similar pattern should cover the feet.

The construction of a suitable head-dress will now require attention. A framework of wire should be made after the pattern shown in Fig. 5, green material being stretched across this and extending like a veil down the back. Two small cardboard boxes to form the foundation of the eyes should be glued to the top in position,

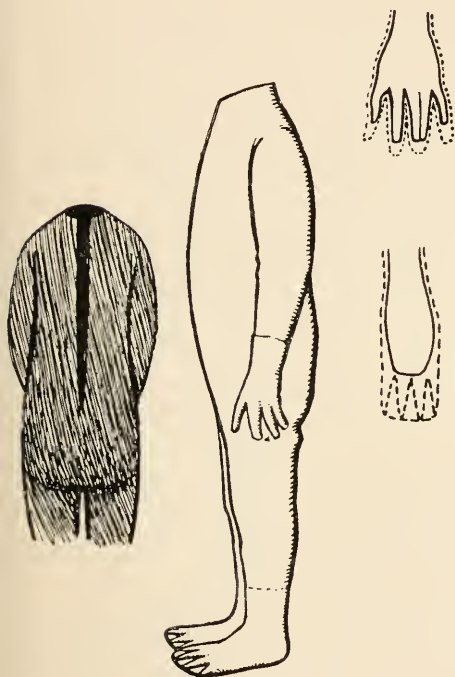


FIG. 4

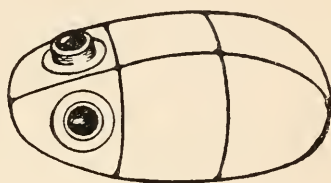


FIG. 5

and over them pieces of material to match the head must be sewn, as indicated by the dotted lines in the figure. Eyeballs made from the halves of india-rubber balls can be painted white, with black pupils, and glued on the sockets prepared for them. The whole covering can then be made to look quite frog-like.

Six Milkmaids and Six Lads.—These characters should be dressed in any simple rural costume, and the girls may carry stools and pails to show their occupation.

Milkmaid Flowers.—The parts of these flowers can be played by little girls in lilac-coloured dresses with green hats. Should there be any difficulty in procuring these, however, almost any costume suggestive of the flower may be used.

MILKMAIDS

CHARACTERS.

LITTLE BRIDGET.

JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

JACK-O'-LANTERN.

FROG.

SIX MILKMAIDS. (MAIDENS.)

EIGHT MILKMAIDS. (FLOWERS.)

SIX LADS.

SCENE I.—*A country lane.**Early morning.**Enter* LITTLE BRIDGET.

Little Bridget. How pretty everything looks so early in the morning ! The grass is still wearing its jewels, and the hedge is all sparkling with diamonds. It is much lovelier now than when Nurse takes me for a walk and the sun tires my eyes. And I am going to see the Milkmaids dancing. This is fairy-time.

[*JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT rises up from where he has been sitting hugging his knees. He takes off his cap with a flourish.*

Little Bridget (starting back). Oh ! I did not expect to see you. Who are you ?

Jack-in-the-Pulpit. When winter still nips
Your nose, and the tips
Of your fingers, and flowers are sleeping,
Look in the hedge-bank,
'Mid the grass growing rank,
And there my green leaves you'll find peeping.

The first bit of green
After winter that's seen
Is the green of my fine silken wrapper.

So when spring has smiled,
And the earth has beguiled,
You shall hark to the ring of my clapper.

Little Bridget. Now I know. You are Jack-in-the-Pulpit. I have found you down in the hedge-bank, and you are so beautifully green.

Jack-in-the-Pulpit. Little Bridget, what are you doing here at five o'clock in the morning, without Nurse ?

Little Bridget. Please, I got up to see the Milkmaids dancing in the water-meads. I have seen such pretty lights dancing where the Milkmaids grow, and you know five o'clock in the morning is the time to see Milkmaids.

Jack-in-the-Pulpit. Go home, little Bridget. This is not a safe time for little girls to go about without nurses. It may be the Milkmaids' hour and the fairies' hour, but mischief-makers are abroad as well.

Little Bridget (her face falling). Oh, dear Jack-in-the-Pulpit, *don't* send me home ; I so very, very much want to see the Milkmaids dance. I will take such care and be so good.

Jack-in-the-Pulpit (severely). Are you always a good little girl ?

Little Bridget (slowly). Generally—but, but—a little girl like me can't *always* be good.

Jack-in-the-Pulpit. Go on then,
Bridget. But take care—beware!
If harm should befall you,
I'll try to be there. [*Vanishes.*

*Little Bridget (goes along dancing
and humming).*

Dewdrops and sunshine, and fairies
and flowers,
Make all the world bright in the
sweet morning hours.

[*JACK-O'-LANTERN comes hop-
ping towards her. He is
dressed in black and white,
with a sparkling star in his
cap.*

Jack-o'-Lantern. Ho! ho! ho!
Who comes here?

Little Bridget. Bridget is my name.
What is yours?

*Jack-o'-Lantern (hopping from one
foot to another).*

Rumpty-Dumpty-oodle-ame,
Jack-o'-Lantern is my name,
With my little dancing spark
I light the travellers after dark.

Little Bridget. How kind of you.

[*JACK-O'-LANTERN laughs wick-
edly.*

Jack-o'-Lantern. Where are you
going to, Bridget?

Little Bridget. I want to see the
Milkmaids dancing.

*Jack-o'-Lantern (beginning to dance
round her).*

Where are you going to, my pretty
maid?

I'm looking for Milkmaids, sir, she
said.

[*Stops abruptly in front of her.*

I'll go with you, Bridget. Do you
know, I am the only person who
can really show you the way.

Down in the water-meads,
'Mid the Kingcups yellow,
Jack-o'-Lantern has his home,
He's a merry fellow.
Little lilac Milkmaids
Lift their pretty heads,
See him dancing up and down,
When folks are in their beds.
How he treats the traveller
They will never tell;
Little lilac Milkmaids
Guard his secret well.

[*He wags his head at BRIDGET.*

You must know, little Bridget, that
my work time is in the evening, so I
can spare this hour to play with you.
Come along.

Enter FROG, dragging his legs heavily.

Frog. Go back! go back!

Little Bridget. Why should I go
back? I want to see the Milkmaids
dancing.

[*JACK-O'-LANTERN makes a
face at FROG.*

Jack-o'-Lantern. Mischief-maker,
stop croaking.

Frog (repeats). Go back! go
back!

Little Bridget. Is he the mischief-
maker? The other Jack told me to
beware.

Frog. But not of me. Listen to
me, Bridget.

Jack-o'-Lantern. Come along,
Bridget, and don't listen to that
croaker. Come, the Milkmaids will
be dancing in the water-meadows.

[*He catches her by the hand
and hurries her away. FROG
slowly retires. Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Meadow.*

Enter BRIDGET and JACK-O'-LANTERN
 R. JACK-O'-LANTERN *hopping and dancing in front of BRIDGET.*
 BRIDGET *walking as if with difficulty.*

Little Bridget. I don't see any Milkmaids here; and oh, how wet and muddy it is!

Jack-o'-Lantern. Come along, Bridget. How slow you are!

Little Bridget. I am coming; but I can't walk as fast as you, and my feet are getting so wet.

Jack-o'-Lantern. You will never see the Milkmaids if you trouble about wet feet.

[FROG *coming hopping towards them.*

Frog. Go back! go back!

[JACK-O'-LANTERN *grimaces at him.*

Jack-o'-Lantern. Croaker! Mischief-maker!

Frog. Bridget, he is the mischief-maker. Go back! go back!

Little Bridget. I have come all this way, and I'm not going back till I have seen the Milkmaids dancing. I don't mind if my feet are wet. (*Stamps her foot. Shoe sticks in the mud.*) Oh! (*Pulling at it. Shoe comes off.*) Oh!

Frog. Ah, Bridget. Won't you go back now?

[JACK-O'-LANTERN *holds his sides and laughs heartily.*

Little Bridget. No, I won't go back, Mr. Froggie, for all your croaking. What if my old shoe has stuck in the mud! My feet can't be wetter. I'll go on without a shoe.

Jack-o'-Lantern. Bravo, Bridget! Come along with me—never mind him.

Follow Jack-o'-Lantern,
 Follow where he goes;
 You shall see the pretty things
 Jack-o'-Lantern shows.
 Milkmaids all a-dancing
 In their lilac frocks,
 Cuckoo flowers some call them,
 Pretty Lady Smocks.

[LITTLE BRIDGET and JACK-O'-LANTERN *go off L.*

Frog. Follow Jack-o'-Lantern?
 Not if you are wise.
 He only lights his candle
 For unheeding eyes.
 Where the tired traveller
 Sees his dancing spark,
 Like a homely beacon
 Shining through the dark:
 If he follow, thinking
 That's his homeward way,
 Wicked Jack-o'-Lantern
 Leads him all astray.

Enter JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

Jack-in-the-Pulpit. Ho! ho! Froggie! Have you met a little girl this morning?

Frog. Little Bridget, do you mean? Yes, she is following Jack-o'-Lantern, who has promised to take her where the Milkmaids dance this morning. But he is leading her through mud and mire. See, there is her shoe.

Jack-in-the-Pulpit. Wilful child! I warned her to take care. I told her mischief-makers were abroad!

Frog. Yes, and she took me for the mischief-maker. You see, *he* called me that, and "an old croaker,"

so she paid no attention to me, but went off after Jack-o'-Lantern through the mud, with only one shoe.

Jack-in-the-Pulpit. Poor little Bridget! But she'll pay heed to you yet, Froggie. You must get her away from Jack-o'-Lantern; and, Froggie, she shall see the Milkmaids for all her wilfulness. I'd take her myself, but I must away on another errand. I shall come back though, and I leave her to you.

[FROG and JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT go off in different directions.]

Enter JACK-O'-LANTERN, and BRIDGET following. BRIDGET has lost her other shoe.

Little Bridget. Jack, Jack, don't go so fast! I can't keep up. We haven't seen any Milkmaids yet, and I'm so tired.

Jack-o'-Lantern. Silly little Bridget. Come along! come along! (*Laughing at her.*)

Little Bridget. You are very unkind to laugh at me. And I don't think you are taking me the right way after all. Why (*stops and looks round her*), we've been here before. You've brought me back to the same place.

Jack-o'-Lantern (beginning to get angry). Nonsense! nonsense!

Little Bridget (discovers her shoe). There's my shoe! It is the same place. You horrid Jack-o'-Lantern. You're just leading me round and round. (*Beginning to cry.*) Oh, what shall I do?

Enter FROGGIE.

Frog. Little Bridget, will you come with me now?

[JACK-O'-LANTERN begins to stamp and grimace.]

Little Bridget. O Froggie, dear Froggie, please take me away from him!

Frog. Now follow me.

[FROG leads BRIDGET off.]

Jack-o'-Lantern (shouting). Mischief-maker! Mischief-maker!

[Rushes off L.]

SCENE III.—BRIDGET discovered asleep at foot of tree.

Enter EIGHT MILKMAIDS (flowers) walking in pairs, dressed in lilac bordered with green.

Milkmaids (singing).

TUNE—"Early one morning."

Early in the morning,
Just as the sun is rising,
Oh sweet 'tis to wander
In meadows fair and green!
Soft winds are blowing,
Streamlets are flowing,
Down by the waters
The Milkmaids are seen.

Oh gay is the springtime,
And fair is the morning,
With dewdrops a-sparkling
On branch and on flower.
Soft winds are blowing,
Streamlets are flowing,
Where fair things are blooming
This earth is a bower.

Come, sisters, let us dance. We are Spring's children; not so fair perhaps as our sisters the primroses and violets, yet the meadows laugh when we appear.

[*They dance. At intervals in the dance they group themselves into fours, representing the cruciform of the flower. Suitable music to accompany dance.*

1st Milkmaid. Sisters, see—a child asleep!

[MILKMAIDS crowd round BRIDGET.

2nd Milkmaid. Gently, sisters, we must not wake her.

3rd Milkmaid. How fair and lovely she is—as beautiful as any flower in spring.

4th Milkmaid. But how came she here?

5th Milkmaid. 'Tis an early hour for mortals to be abroad.

6th Milkmaid. Aye, none but our namesakes the Milkmaids are out at five o'clock in the morning, and they rise to go a-milking.

7th Milkmaid. Hush, sisters, here come our namesakes, the real Milkmaids.

8th Milkmaid. To them we must be just flowers growing in the meadow.

[*They scatter and stand motionless like growing flowers.*

Enter the MILKMAIDS, carrying milking pails and singing. Walking two and two; six in number (twelve if desirable).

MILKMAIDS (*Girls*), *singing.*

TUNE—"Come, lasses and lads."

The morning is bright,
We rise with the light,
And away to our milking hie.
There's Madge and there's Kate
We're none of us late,
Nor still in our beds do lie.
There's Mary and Sue and Joan,

And Nancy and Jill and May,
And we've all of us a Jack of our own
When we dance on a holiday;
And we've all of us a Jack of our own
When we dance on a holiday.

[*They cross the stage and go off L. BRIDGET awakens.*

Little Bridget (rubbing her eyes and looking about her). Where am I? I must have been asleep. Now I remember, Froggie took me away from that horrid Jack-o'-Lantern. (*Sees the Milkmaids, claps her hands.*) Ah, there are the Milkmaids. Pretty things! Dear Milkmaids, do dance to me. I got up so early and came all the way to see you. And I have lost both my shoes in the mud because Jack-o'-Lantern took me quite the wrong way.

[MILKMAIDS move towards her, and group themselves round her.

1st Milkmaid. So you came to see us dance?

2nd Milkmaid. So you shall, dear.

3rd Milkmaid. That naughty Jack-o'-Lantern.

4th Milkmaid. Yes, we know his tricks.

5th Milkmaid. Look at her poor little bare feet.

6th Milkmaid. See her pretty hair and eyes.

7th Milkmaid. And she came all by herself to see us dance.

8th Milkmaid. Come, sisters, we will dance to her.

[*They dance again. BRIDGET watches eagerly, clapping her hands at intervals and crying, "How beautiful!" At the end of the dance they cluster round BRIDGET.*

1st Milkmaid. Tell us your name, little girl?

Little Bridget. I'm called little Bridget. Thank you for your pretty dance.

2nd Milkmaid. We will dance for you again if you will stay with us, Bridget.

3rd Milkmaid. Yes, the water-meadows are a beautiful place to live in.

Little Bridget. But they are rather wet.

4th Milkmaid. We like that, Bridget; we can't do without water. Can you?

Little Bridget (doubtfully). Of course not to drink and wash in; but I could not live in it.

5th Milkmaid. Could you not? Our friend the water-rat can.

Little Bridget (laughing). But I'm a little girl, and he's a water-rat.

6th Milkmaid (stroking Bridget's hair). It must be very nice to be a little girl.

Little Bridget. I think you must be very happy to be a flower coming in the spring.

7th Milkmaid. But we may not stay; you know we go away before the hot summer days.

Little Bridget. Tell me, dear Milkmaids, where do you go?

8th Milkmaid. Stay with us, Bridget dear, and we will show you. We will take you.

All. Yes, stay with us, Bridget; stay with us!

Little Bridget. But, dear Milkmaids, I couldn't leave Mother and Daddy and Nurse, and Baby Brother.

All. Yes, yes, stay with us; we will not let you go.

[They crowd round her. She starts up frightened.]

Little Bridget. No, no! Let me go!

[Sound of singing approaching.]

MILKMAIDS pause and listen, then scatter in all directions, standing motionless as growing flowers.

Enter MILKMAIDS, each with a country lad helping to carry the pail.

MILKMAIDS (singing).

TUNE—"I've been roaming."

We've been milking, we've been milking,

Where the grass is green and sweet,
And the cows are patient standing
With the flowers around their feet.

We've been milking, we've been milking,

While the dew is sparkling bright,
And the breath of early morning
Makes the work a pure delight.

Lads. We've been milking, we've been milking,

Where the fairest maiden trips,
And we've found there's nothing sweeter

Than the smile upon her lips.

We've been milking.

All. We've been milking, we've been milking,

In the morning cool and sweet,
And we're coming, home we're coming,

With the dew upon our feet.

[They set down their pails near BRIDGET.]

1st Milkmaid. Good morning, little girl! Who are you?

Little Bridget. Please, I'm little Bridget.

2nd Milkmaid. Has anybody frightened you, dear?

Little Bridget. Please, the Milkmaids wanted me to stay with them for always.

3rd Milkmaid. But we are the Milkmaids, and we never saw you before.

Little Bridget. No, not you, not real Milkmaids, you know, but the flower Milkmaids.

[The flower MILKMAIDS begin to shake and flutter about, and to cast angry glances at BRIDGET.]

Little Bridget (slowly). I think they do not like me to tell you.

[The MILKMAIDS look round at the flowers.]

Another Milkmaid. There they are, but they can do you no harm.

Little Bridget (cautiously). They weren't there just now. They were all round me. (Lowering her voice.) I could not get away. You see, they had been dancing to me. It was very nice of them, and they danced beautifully; but of course I don't want to stay here always.

Another Milkmaid. No, of course not. You must come home with us.

[The flower MILKMAIDS quiver and shake, and cast imploring glances at BRIDGET.]

Little Bridget. They really want me very badly, I think; and I expect they would dance to me often.

Another Milkmaid. But we will dance to you, Bridget, and then we will take you home. You must not stay here any longer. Mother and Nurse will think you are lost.

[The LADS spring up; each takes his maid by the hand.]

Lads. Come, let us dance.

[The flower MILKMAIDS begin to creep out.]

Little Bridget (waving her hand to them). Good-bye, dear Milkmaids—good-bye. I will come and see you again.

[JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT appears on one side of her. FROGGIE on the other.]

Jack-in-the-Pulpit. No, no, Bridget—remember Jack-o'-Lantern. You must not come again to see the Milkmaids dance, or worse harm may come to you. You must be content to see the Milkmaids growing in the meadows in the daytime. These are the Milkmaids to dance to you. Ho! ho! Milkmaids, dance away!

Frog Croak, croak.

[LADS and MILKMAIDS dance. BRIDGET and JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT watching. When the dance is over they come and pick up their pails. The last couple stretch out their hands to BRIDGET.]

Milkmaids and Lads. Come, Bridget.

[JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT seizes the last pail and carries it along, staggering under the load. They point at him laughing. They take BRIDGET'S hand, and all go off saying.]

“Mid pleasures and palaces
Tho' I may roam,
Be it ever so humble
There's no place like home.”

CURTAIN.

THE FAIRIES

By WINIFRED DARCH

(Based on William Allingham's "*Wee Folk—Good Folk*")

THE setting and costumes for this play are so very simple that scarcely any instructions are necessary. The first and third scenes are "box" scenes, constructed of flats, disposed after the manner shown in Fig. 1. Flat No. 1 is a door flat, and the various characters enter and make their exits through the practicable door which it contains. Flat No. 2 has a window, but as there is no occasion for this to be opened, it may be simply painted upon an ordinary plain flat. In the double flat No. 3 the large opening serves for a fireplace, upon the hearth of which is a box containing several large logs. The back of the fireplace should be painted black, as though begrimed with much smoke, whilst a jack or a large pot-hook can be fastened in from the back. Above the fireplace, on a couple of brackets, is fixed a shelf, upon

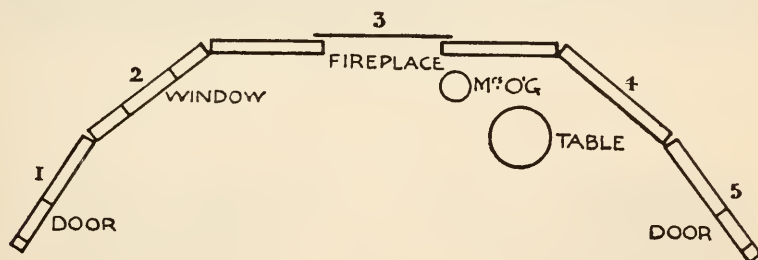


FIG. 1

which are arranged a number of polished tins, with a clock in the centre. The walls can be painted white, with here and there stains and patches, as though the plaster were about to fall. Flats Nos. 4 and 5 should be plain, although the latter may have a door painted upon it.

The second and fourth scenes will require a back-cloth, painted somewhat after the manner shown in Fig. 2, to represent a desolate meadow, beyond which the distant hills loom blue. Little broken-down shanties amongst several trees add an air of desolation to the scene. Two wings can be painted to represent old and decaying trees, Fig. 3. A little low, stunted undergrowth at the base will suit admirably with this type of landscape.

COSTUMES

Mrs. O'Grady.—This character should be made up for advanced middle-age, with grey hair parted down the centre, and the eyes slightly lined. Her dress should be

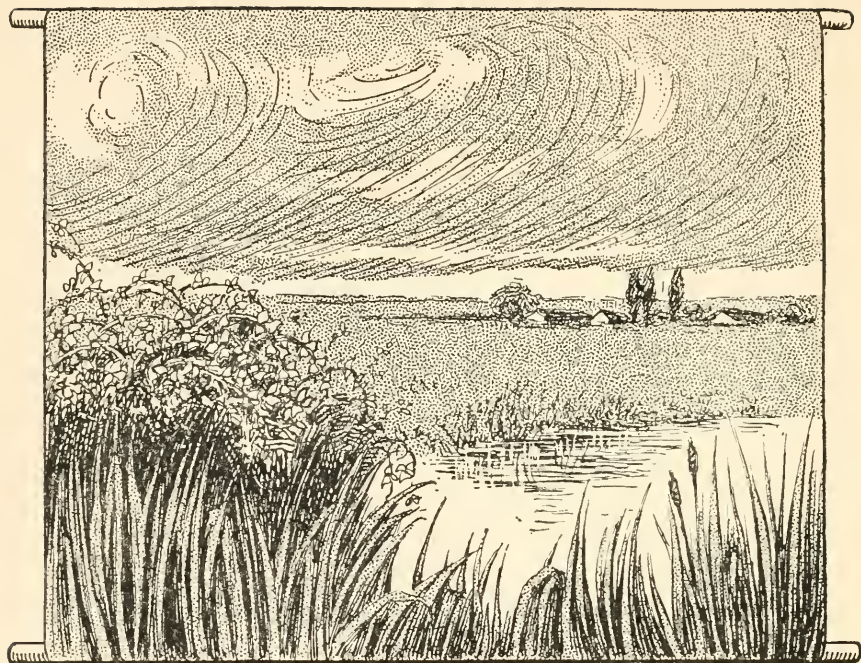


FIG. 2

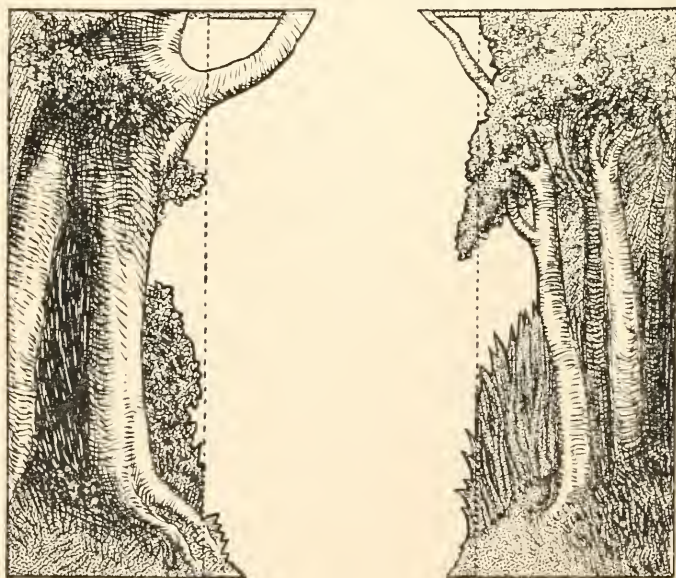


FIG. 3

that of an Irish cottager, with a homely bodice and skirt, and a plain shawl drawn over the shoulders.

Norah, Eira, and Sheila, the three daughters of Mrs. O'Grady, must have red hooded cloaks, short skirts, bare legs and feet, and hair loose down the back.

Little Bridget.—Being a great favourite amongst the fairies, Little Bridget must be dressed very neatly in pure white. In the last scene, however, when she is crowned, she should be provided with a "dewdrop crown," easily constructed of wire and glass beads, and a "moonlight woven gown" made of some blue shot material, and reaching to the heels.

The King of the Fairies.—This is a stooping old man, who has to support his tottering form with a stick. Ragged white locks push out from beneath his crown and cluster round his neck. He should wear a long white cloak with yellow trimmings, ornamented here and there with shamrocks.

The Fairies.—There is great room for individual taste in arranging the costumes of the fairies for this piece. Green muslin dresses adorned with wings and other such fairy appurtenances may be adapted in numberless different ways. It would be a very good plan to study the pictures and illustrations of some well-known artist, such as Arthur Rackham, for ideas as to fairy costumes. Suggestions obtained from such a source and suitably carried out will enable a pretty and realistic performance of "The Fairies" to be produced.

THE FAIRIES

CHARACTERS.

MORTALS.

MRS. O'GRADY.

NORAH.

EIRA.

SHEILA.

} *Her daughters.*

LITTLE BRIDGET.

FAIRIES.

THE KING OF THE FAIRIES.

1ST FAIRY.

2ND FAIRY.

3RD FAIRY.

CHORUS OF FAIRIES.

SCENE I.—*An Irish Farmhouse Interior.*

SCENE II.—*The Fairies' Dancing Place.*

SCENE III.—*The Irish Farmhouse—as before.*

SCENE IV.—*The Fairies' Dancing Place—as before.*

SCENE I.—*A Kitchen or Sitting-room.*

MRS. O'GRADY *discovered* knitting.

She looks anxiously at the clock.

Then enter NORAH, EIRA, and SHEILA.

Mrs. O'Grady. O Norah, Eira, and Sheila dear,

You are home so late, I began to fear

That you had been down to the Rushy Glen

And seen——

Norah. What, mother?

Mrs. O'Grady (impressively). The little men!

Eira. Oh! is it the fairies that you mean,

Who dance in the moonlight dressed in green,

Who dip in the rock-pools their white, bare feet,

And play with the rushes tall and sweet ?

Sheila. Tell me, dear mother, why mayn't we see

The wee folk dance by the land-locked sea ?

Or the old King fly through the starry nights

To sup with the Queen of the Northern Lights ?

Mrs. O'Grady. I'll tell you a tale, my daughters dear,

To show you why you should look with fear

On these folk who in lone parts make their home,

And cook them pancakes of yellow foam.

'Twas years ago, in this western wild

Lived Patrick O'Brien, his wife and child,

His one-year-old Bridget with rippling hair,

With dimpled cheeks and blue eyes fair.

Seven years ago, on a winter night,

The fairies stole her by white moon-light !

The mother woke—but the child was gone !

A dreadful sorrow to think upon !

Molly O'Brien she cried full sore ;

They searched till they could search no more.

They left their cabin beside the strand,

And went away to another land.

Seven long years there since have been,

But little Bridget has not been seen.

Norah. Indeed, dear mother, we see quite well

That she with the fairies has gone to dwell.

Do you think her happy ? or does she cry

For the yellow corn and the summer sky ?

Mrs. O'Grady. Alas, my Norah, I do not know,

For it happened seven long years ago.

(*Another tone.*) And now I must go the supper to set,

Ere father comes in so tired and wet.

So get out your samplers, or sew a seam,

And I'll give you a bowl of curds and cream.

[*Exit* MRS. O'GRADY. NORAH gets out her work-basket ;

EIRA and SHEILA fidget round the room.

Sheila. Pull close the curtain.

It blows a gale !

What think you, sissies, of mother's tale ?

Eira. Only, my Sheila, I long still more

To find my way to the lone lake shore,

To dance with the wee folk dressed in green,

Perhaps be chosen the Fairy Queen !

Norah. O Eira, oh ! What great conceit !

Fairies have *tiny* hands and feet !

Besides, you'd quickly long for home,

And get quite tired of eating foam.

Sheila. But yet I'd like to see them too!

I'll tell you a thing that we might do!—

Slip out one night when the moon shines clear,

And run to the lonely lake-shore near,

Perchance—who knows?—we may see *her* too,

Poor little Bridget with eyes of blue.

Norah. But what will mother say to this?

Sheila. Oh, we would never tell her, sis.

'Twould frighten her, and make her sad;

I like to see dear mother glad.

Norah. Somehow, I do not think it right.

Eira (*scornfully*). Oh, well, you need not come that night,

But I and Sheila we shall see
The folk who live by the land-locked sea,

The fairy babies and fairy mothers,
The fairy sisters and fairy brothers—

[*A bell rings.*

There's mother ringing the supper bell,

And mind you, *Norah*, you're *not* to tell.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The FAIRIES'*

Dancing Place.

[*Some of the FAIRIES are dancing in a circle, others, sitting down, are eating off lily-leaf plates.*

Enter the 1st FAIRY.

1st Fairy. Back! All you folk who dance the ring!

Room, all, for our most noble King!

He sits upon the mountain throne,
And all of Fairyland does own.

He's older than these ancient hills,
And far above our petty ills!

With him comes his adopted child,
Sweet Bridget of the Connaught wild.

Prepare to bow before his Grace,
Let him not see one naughty face.

[*The FAIRIES form ranks, down the centre of which the KING and BRIDGET pass. He is very small, and very old. She is dressed like a human child.*

King. Wee folk, Good Folk
(For mortals call you so),

My very loyal subjects,
Who dance by moonlight's flow,
To-day it is my birthday,
So show me some delights,
And let me hear you call this
The brightest of all nights.

2nd Fairy. Shall we dance, or
shall we sing,

Tripping in a silver ring?
Little Bridget, take our hands,
Dance you in our fairy bands?

Bridget. No! I cannot dance to-day,

For my mind is far away.

(*To the KING.*) Something tells me,
father dear,

I should not be living here;
Something sounds within my ears,
" 'Tis the day of seven years,
Bridget, little Bridget, come—

Come back to your olden home!"

All the Fairies (*in tones of consternation*). O great King,

Thronèd so high,
Hast thou forgot
The days gone by,
When little Bridget,
Baby white,
Was stolen by us

One winter night ?

Bridget (to the KING). Tell the
truth !—oh ! tell me now,

Father with the crownèd brow,
Say, was I a human child

Dwelling on the Connaught wild ?

King (in tones of grief). O little
Bridget,

Little Bridget, stay !

You shall be so happy

All the live-long day.

You shall wed a fairy prince,

Wear a crown of gold,

And shall half my kingdom have,

Wealth and pearls untold.

All Fairies. O little Bridget,

Little Bridget, stay !

Bridget. Oh ! very good you have
always been ;

I have been used like a royal queen.
But yet I long for the fields so
green,

The ponds with the ducks all white
and clean,

And the wee black pigs that grunt
and squeal,

And the dear soft puss that round
doth steal.

Father, dear father, pray let me
go,

'Tis your birthday now, so you
can't say no.

Besides, in the world so fair to
see,

My real mother still cries for
me !

King. No, little Bridget,
I cannot answer "No,"
Though my heart is heavy,
Home you now must go.

Kiss me, little Bridget—

Kiss me then once more.

All of us shall watch you go

Up from the lone lake shore.

2nd Fairy. Bridget, good-bye, come
back again,

And always here with us remain

To dance upon the moonlit plain.

3rd Fairy. And if your mother
you don't see,

And lonely is the old roof-tree,

Your home is here, by the land-
locked sea.

All Fairies. We will all go to say
good-bye—

We are so sad, we should like to cry ;

We are too sad to dance to-night,

Though the lake is smooth, and the
moon shines bright.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

*Enter from the opposite side EIRA
and SHEILA.*

Sheila. Eira ! At last this is the
place,

For here I see the wee folks' trace,
And marked on the sand floor soft
and sweet

Are the shapes of a hundred tiny
feet.

Eira (discovering FAIRIES' food).

And here they have left their
supper—taste ;

For mother says it is bad to waste.

Sheila (tasting). Oh ! oh ! how
horrid ! What nasty stuff !

Eira (tasting). Ugh ! just one
mouthful and that's enough !

I really think it is time to go,
For mother, of all things, must not
know.

Sheila. Supposing Norah were
just to tell?

Eira. Oh, Sheila! you know her
far too well;

She may be funny, and silly too,
But she isn't a tell-tale—not *like*
you!

Sheila. You horrid girl—I'll slap
your face,
For calling me names of such dis-
grace.

[*EIRA and SHEILA scuffle.*]

Enter KING and FAIRIES.

King. By my beard and sceptre!
A pretty sight!
Two mortal maidens who scratch
and fight!

Would our sweet Bridget e'er do so?
Answer me, Fairies!

Fairies. No! no! no!

[*The KING signs to the FAIRIES,
who seize EIRA and SHEILA.*]

King. Pinch them, Fairies—poke
them too!

Pinch them, Fairies, black and blue!
Tickle them and pull their hair!
Give them punishment most rare!
Uninvited have they come,
And have asked no leave at home;
Stolen, too, your food and drink——

1st Fairy. Shall we dye them black
as ink?

2nd Fairy. Shall we turn them
into frogs?

3rd Fairy. They would make us
good watch-dogs.

King. No! they shall your servants
be,

Always toiling, never free!
And their pretty clothes shall
tear,

Tangled grow their silken hair,
Rosy cheeks look thin and pale,
Childish laughter fade and fail,
Till at length they've understood
To obedient be and good.

Eira. Listen to me, I will *not* stay
here.

Sheila. I'm so unhappy and wild
with fear.

Eira (kneeling). Tell me, great
King, will you let us go?

King. Answer them, Fairies.

Fairies. No! no! no!

SCENE III.—*The O'GRADYS' house.*

NORAH discovered crying.

Enter MRS. O'GRADY.

Mrs. O'Grady (in despair). Norah,
my darling. Oh! where can
they be?

I've searched high and low—not a
sign can I see.

Their little white beds are all tidy
and neat,

And gone are their clothes and
the shoes for their feet.

Then speak to me, Norah, my one
daughter left,

To me your poor mother of all
things bereft:

Can you tell me where Eira and
Sheila did go?

And your father will search for them
both high and low.

Norah (sobbing). Oh mother, dear
mother, if only I could!

But I promised—besides, would it
do any good?

Mrs. O'Grady (sharply). "Would it do any good"? Is the child going mad?

O Norah, who'd think you so wicked and bad?

"Would it do any good"? O child, you don't mean

That they've joined the wee people, the dancers in green?

(Norah gasps.) 'Tis true then—I see it. My children, my own, They've gone, and for ever! Oh, I might have known.

[Covers her face.]

Enter BRIDGET, she does not see the others.

Bridget. To be up in the world is so lovely a thing,

I was nearly forgetting the poor fairy King;

I've run with the rabbits and sung with the birds,

And watched the great cows coming up in their herds.

I've gathered these snowdrops so dainty and white;

I'm so pleased with the day, I was tired of the night.

But there's one thing I want so much more than another,

And that is to meet with my own darling mother.

[Sees MRS. O'GRADY.]

There's some one here, crying—perhaps it is she?

Poor mother! And is she still crying for me?

I'll speak to her gently.

Dear mother, don't cry!

I'm home from the fairies! We'll talk by and by.

Mrs. O'Grady (starting up, sitting down again). Ah! you are not Eira! Oh dear! and oh dear!

You made me think, child, my own babies were here!

Bridget. Then aren't you my mother?

Mrs. O'Grady. No, certainly not—What curious manners you seem to have got!

Bridget. Then *you're* not my mother! Oh dear, and oh dear!

(To Norah.) And *you're* not my sister who sits crying here.

Norah. Oh! please don't be vexed. My two sisters are lost

And mother's unhappy! She must not be crossed.

Bridget. Your two sisters lost! Why, which way did they go?

Norah. I think to the fairies—I really don't know.

Bridget. "You think to the fairies!" Why, *I* come from there!

But why should they want to? This place is more fair.

Norah. Do *you* come from there? Oh, then you must tell—

Please don't think me rude, but just answer me well.

You come from the fairies, and Bridget's your name?

Bridget. I've always been called so, and told 'twas the same.

Norah. Is it Bridget O'Brien?

Bridget. Ah, that I don't know.

'Twas the fairies who stole me seven long years ago.

Norah. Then you *are* little Bridget!

(To MRS. O'GRADY.) Dear mother,
one word—

This is Bridget O'Brien of whom
you have heard ;

Seven years with the fairies ! But
now she's come home !

Mrs. O'Grady. But her people are
all gone away o'er the foam.

O Bridget, you come on a sorrow-
ful day,

Now the fairies have stolen my
babies away !

My Eira and Sheila, so sweet and
so dear.

Bridget. Why, then were they
sweeter than Norah who's
here ?

[MRS. O'GRADY *only sobs.*

Then, Norah, we will start to-day,
And I will show you the proper way
To the fairy place by the lone lake
side,

Where the rushes tall our people
hide ;

And there we will seek out the old
wise King,

As he sits on his throne in a silver
ring,

And tell him we're willing to stay
down below,

If he will let Eira and Sheila go.

Norah. Yes, I will remain by the
dark lake wave,

If only we Sheila and Eira save ;

Then let us slip out, ere poor
mother can see,

Already she's frightened as
frightened can be.

[*Exeunt BRIDGET and NORAH.*

MRS. O'GRADY *rouses herself.*

Mrs. O'Grady. Alack the day !

Has *she* gone too ?

My little Norah, so brave and true.

[*Goes to the door.*

Norah, my child, come back, come
back,

There's naught but wind and
stormy wrack,

A dreary day to come upon,

With Norah, Eira, Sheila gone !

SCENE IV.—*The FAIRIES'*

Dancing Place.

*Enter the 1ST FAIRY ; she wears a
worried expression.*

1st Fairy. His Grace the King
has been most kind,

But still I think I know my mind,

I'd rather do my own hard work

Than always have a maid to shirk.

A fairy servant makes me whirl,

But far worse is a human girl ;

She breaks each acorn cup and
plate,

And breaks the more, the more I
rate.

She spills the pots of fresh May-
dew,

And doesn't bake the newt pies
through,

She larks about her foolish fun—

I wonder if my washing's done ?

Enter SHEILA.

Well, now, you lazy, idle drone,

Who let me do my work alone—

To do your best you never try.

Now are the cobwebs put to dry ?

Sheila.

No, but—

1st Fairy. Well, then, take that
—and that,

[*Slaps SHEILA.*

And don't squall like a frightened cat,

But go and smooth my cobwebs
fair,

And hang them on the bushes there.

[*Exit 1st FAIRY.*]

Sheila. Oh dear! oh dear! How
tired I am,

And hungry! Oh, for bread and
jam,

Potatoes fresh, and herrings red,
And sleep within my own white
bed!

These horrid cobwebs up I'll tear,

[*Tears cobwebs.*]

Not hang them on the bushes there;

And for these odious, spiky shoots,

[*Turns to bushes.*]

I'll pull them all up by the roots.

[*Pulls up bushes.*]

Enter EIRA with a pail.

Eira. When this is done, our
mistress said,

We both of us might go to bed.

This foam I drew from out the lake

That she of it might pancakes make.

How hard the beds look, but if they

Were made of iron I'd sleep to-day.

Sheila. Eira, you once thought,
dressed in green,

The Fairy folk would choose you
Queen,

Would crown your floating hair
with flowers,

And lead you through the rose-filled
bowers.

But we are pinched and beaten
slaves,

Imprisoned by the dark lake waves.

Eira. And I of mother sadly
dream,

And our white house beside the
stream,

Of father, tall and strong and brave,
Who us so many pleasures gave.

I rather fancy, do you know,

'Twas our own fault we suffered so.

Sheila. I do not. 'Twas the
Fairies' spite

Who caught us here the other night;

But I have spoilt the thorn trees
fine

They all use as a washing-line.

Eira. Well now, lie down, here
is our bed.

And sleepiness quite turns my head!

[*They lie down. In another
moment SHEILA jumps up
with a shriek.*]

Sheila. Oh! oh! oh! oh! It's
hurting so,

I don't know where to turn or go.

[*Runs about the stage.*]

Eira (sitting up). Sheila, have you
begun to dream?

Whatever was that frightful scream?

Sheila. There's something awful
in my bed.

No sooner had I dropped my head

Than I was pricked with frightful
pricks,

Far worse than all the Fairies' sticks.

I feel like a cushion full of pins.

Re-enter 1st FAIRY.

1st Fairy. But they're not too
many for your sins.

Who tore my washing, shred from
shred,

And left my thorn trees lying dead?

You don't deserve it, nor do you
(*to Eira*).

But here's a visitor coming too!

[*Exit FAIRY, enter NORAH.*]

Eira. Norah! 'Tis glorious to see
your face.

But you've not come to this awful place ?

O Norah dear, you were never strong ;

I'm sure it would kill you quite ere long.

Sheila. Norah, your face is all sad and white.

Are father and mother quite all right ?

It was most cruel of us to go

Away in the dark, and fright them so !

Norah. O darling sisters, how tired you seem !

But this will soon be a hateful dream.

Mother and father they wait at home

The happy hour when back you come.

Eira. But surely, Norah, you're coming too ?

Norah. I must stay here instead of you.

Sheila. You shall not ; I would rather stay

Alone forever and a day.

March. Enter KING, BRIDGET,
and FAIRIES.

King. Well now, my maidens, I think you know

The lesson that we have tried to show.

And you, brave Norah, who dared to come

To save your sisters, shall too go home.

[*The three curtsey and kiss the KING'S hand.*]

Norah. But, mighty King, with the long white hair,

What of our friend, sweet Bridget, there ?

King. Bridget has promised to stay with me

Since her real mother she cannot see.

But if her mother should e'er come home,

Norah, will you to the lake-side come,

And call out "Bridget" both loud and clear ?

Then Bridget shall come, for she will hear.

And now, my maidens, before you go,

That you of the fairies' joys may know,

Sit you down while my people play

Some beautiful sports they have learned to-day.

[*The KING and CHILDREN sit down while the FAIRIES dance.*]

SONG (*Air, "Nuts and May"*).

Whom shall we choose for the Queen of all

To wear the dewdrop crown,

And the sceptre made of the red rose tall,

And the moonlight woven gown ?

Whom shall we choose for our lady Queen,

To wear the shoes of pearl,

To live in a palace of bracken green,
Whose frondlets softly curl ?

Whom shall we choose but the Queen of Hearts,

The maid with waving hair,

And the red, red lips which the slow smile parts—

'Tis she the crown must wear !

All the Fairies (cry together). Bridget, little Bridget!
 She shall be our Queen!
 Crown her, moonlight dancers,
 Wearers of the green!

[*The FAIRIES crown BRIDGET.*
3rd Fairy. Crownèd Queen with
 eyes of blue,
 We would hear some words from
 you.

Will you always happy be
 With the fairy people free?

Bridget. Oh yes! I'll be happy,
 If I have one thing.

Do grant it, dear Fairies,
 And you, father King,
 That Nora and Eira
 And Sheila may come
 And play with me sometimes
 In my fairy home.

King. Sweet daughter, 'tis granted
 Or ever 'tis said—

But now these young maidens

Must run home to bed.
 One word, my sweet mortals,
 And that is, "Good-night!"
 The moon in the heavens
 Is shining most bright.

[*While the three GIRLS bid
 good-bye to the KING and
 BRIDGET, the FAIRIES say
 or sing.*

Fairies. 'Tis the hour when alive
 is the land-lockèd lake,
 The Bright of the Moon,
 When mortals must sleep and when
 fairies must wake,
 And dance out their shoon.

'Tis the hour when the wee folk,
 the dancers in green,
 Have the greatest delight.
 But, mortals, we wish you, and so
 does our Queen,
 Good-night and good-night!

CURTAIN.

THICKHEAD

By HERBERT WOTTON WESTBROOK

WITH MUSIC BY ELLA KING HALL

ACT I.

THE scenery for the first Act of "Thickhead" represents a village green, in the centre of which stands a Maypole.

Commencing with the back-cloth, this should be painted very similar to the design

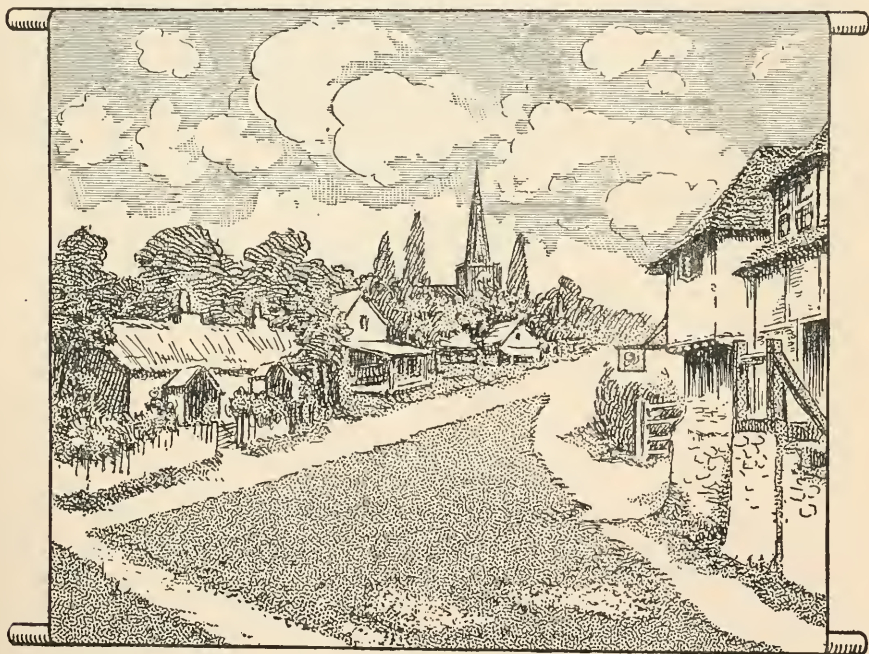


FIG. 1

shown in Fig. 1, depicting a triangular village green bordered with cottages, amongst which the parish Church nestles reposefully. Above all, a blue sky, dotted with flecks of white cloud, furnishes a natural contrast to this rustic scene.

The right wing represents the cottage door, shown in Fig. 2, and must be made of a flat containing a practicable door and window. The construction of the door needs no special directions, but the workable portion of the window will only require to be

of the size shown by the dotted lines, the other portion being painted on the flat. The reason for this lies in the fact that this same flat will be used again in the second scene, where a small window is required, consequently it must be hinged in such a way that it will open inwards, for the second scene.

The other wing should be painted to represent the side of a barn, the lower portion being coloured with red and yellow ochre to represent old bricks, emerging from a bed of nettles and grass. The upper part can be painted purple, to resemble

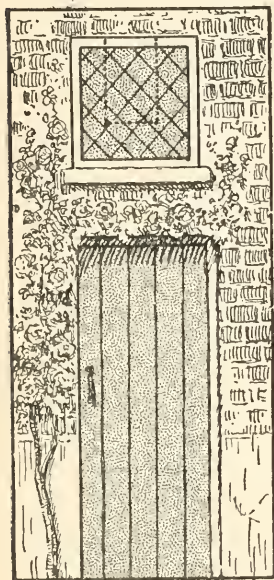


FIG. 2

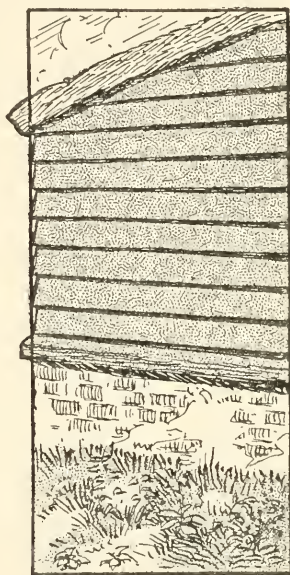


FIG. 3

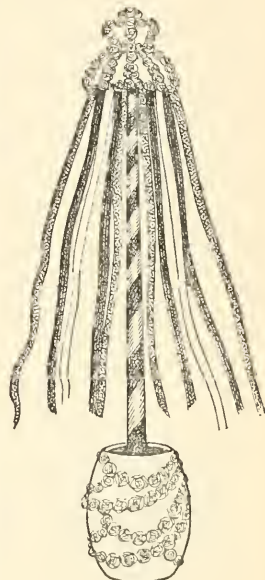


FIG. 4

tarred boards rising to a sloped roof. The triangular portion to the left of the flat should be blue, to harmonise with the sky in the background.

Green baize placed on the stage will serve to represent grass, or a similar effect can be produced with canvas painted yellow and adorned with patches of green.

The Maypole, shown in Fig. 4, consists of a pole set upright in a tub in the centre of the stage. The tub should be green, and encircled with wreaths of roses, the pole being painted white, with a wire crown covered with roses fitted on the top, as shown in the diagram. Beneath this crown a number of different coloured ribbons are tacked, stretching to the ground to enable the dancers to circle round the pole with the ribbons in their hands.

ACTS II. AND III.

The scene of these Acts lies on the Moorish coast, whither Thickhead and the wreckers sailed in search of plunder.

The back-cloth, Fig. 5, which may be painted on the reverse side of the cloth

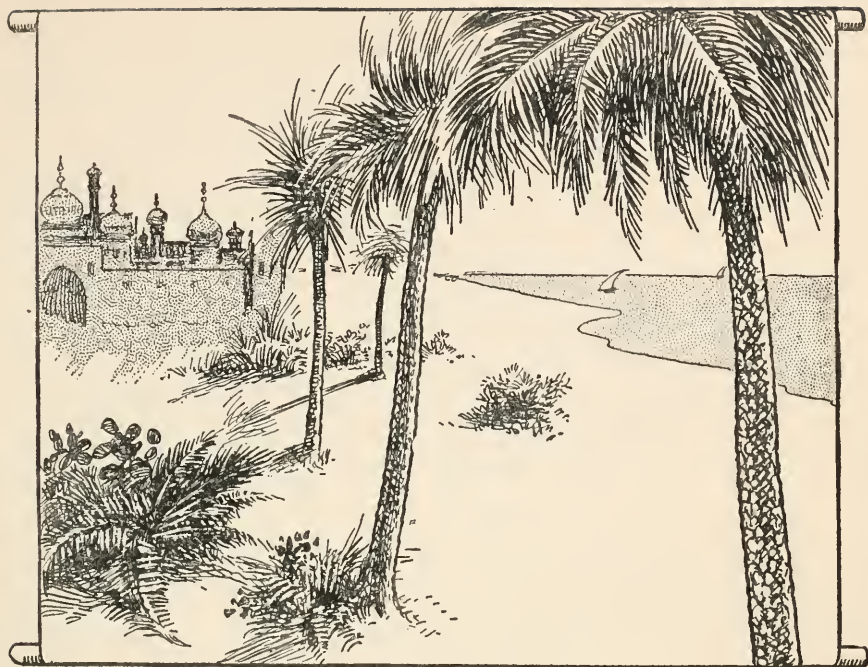


FIG. 5

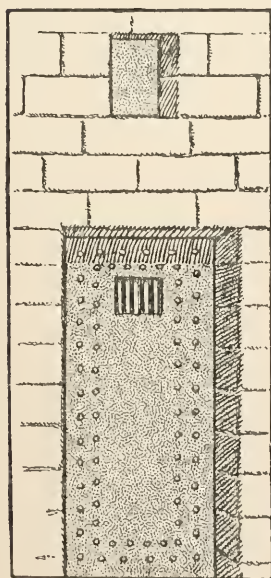


FIG. 6



FIG. 7

used in Act I., should represent a desert coast, with a few palms in the foreground, and across a waste of yellow sand, the blue of the distant sea. On the left are seen some Moorish dwellings with delicate minarets, which stand out clear against the deep blue of the sky.

The wings used in the first Act may be reversed—that of the cottage door being painted to represent a fortress wall, Fig. 6, in which the door is studded with great nails; whilst the small window above is just large enough to allow one of the actors, mounted upon a pair of steps behind the scene, to pour the molten lead over Burgess. This flat should be so placed that the audience have a full view of the window.

The other wing should be painted with palm-trees, as shown in Fig. 7, and arranged after the following plan to represent a tent with flapping doors. Two pieces of canvas are required, one being large enough to stretch from B to D, where it is glued on the one side, and from B to E on the other. This can be pegged at F, thus making it stand out from the flat. The second piece of canvas, A, of the same size, should be tacked to the flat at B and to the floor at C, being left to flap loose from B to E.

PROPERTIES

Blowhard's Whistle.—This can be an ordinary penny tin whistle or flageolet. A cardboard notice bearing the legend—

Yes.	2 Whistles.
No.	1 Whistle.

can be fastened by a piece of string threaded through the lowest hole in the pipe.

Gramophone.—The sound of this instrument can be imitated by a squeaky voice chanting the words "Come and be wrecked" behind the scenes.

The Wrecker's Flag.—This should be a tattered piece of cloth ornamented with some device, such as two flaming torches crossed.

Molten Lead can be produced with silver sand, into which a number of small pellets of silver paper have been mixed. The silver cap which Burgess wears to represent the lead that has been poured over him should be a close-fitting skull-cap covered with silver paper.

COSTUMES

Burgess.—The principal character of the piece should appear throughout as a simple country lad, with hair roughed up and cheeks painted to represent the healthy red of a village youth. Thickhead can be dressed in a cut-away coat, red waistcoat, check trousers, and gaiters.

The Three Village Lads will appear in the first Act in smock-frocks, made after the design shown in Fig. 8. These should be made of putty-coloured casement cloth or any other brownish material; the smocking shown on the front can be repeated behind or made in a yoke, the work being executed by some lady friend or sister. Gaiters and felt hats will complete the outfit.

The Squire.—The old Squire should be a typical John Bull—with high collar and stock, horseshoe pin, smart breeches, and low top-hat. For this purpose an ordinary top-hat with a curled brim can be cut down in the manner shown in Fig. 9. A piece about the size of the portion shown in shading at A should be cut away altogether; from the lower part, B, a number of V-shaped notches must be cut, so that the lower part of the hat may be fitted into the top part, as shown in the dotted line C. When the joint has been covered with a broad band, the hat will present the appearance of the low top-hat shown in D. This hat would look better if made from an old grey top-hat such as sportsmen use.

The Squire's feet and legs must be encased in top-boots, made according to the following directions. Four pieces of paper or, better still, American cloth, two for

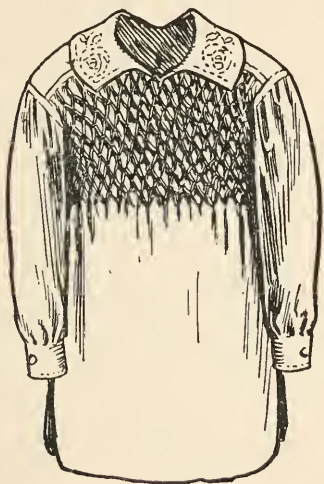


FIG. 8

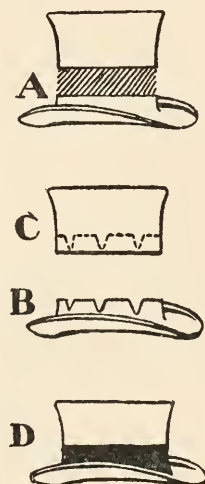


FIG. 9

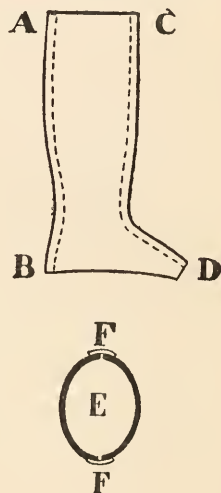


FIG. 10

each leg, must be cut after the pattern shown in ABCD, Fig. 10. Two binding strips, FF, of the same material should then be glued, as shown in the dotted lines, so that, when dry, the two pieces can be opened to form a legging, illustrated in section E E of the same figure.

A band of yellow paper, A, Fig. 11, should be cut, folded over as at B, and pasted round the top of the boot, C; whilst a strap, D, at the bottom, can be placed under the instep to keep this top in position over the actual boot.

A make-up of red cheeks and light grey whiskers will make the Squire a most realistic figure. He can carry a riding-whip in his hand, and should have a large fob hanging from his waistcoat pocket.

For his second costume the Squire should be dressed in white ducks, canvas shoes, and a large sun-helmet made after the following pattern. Cut off the brim of an ordinary "bowler" hat, leaving a ledge about half an inch wide all round, to which a new brim must be glued. This new brim should be cut of stiff cardboard, Fig. 12, the brim, AA, being bent in such a way that, when it is fitted over the hat, it will turn down, as at DD. A small nob or button of wood, B, must be glued to the top of

the hat, whilst a puggaree, CC, can be wrapped round to conceal the place where the false brim was put on. When the felt has been covered with several coatings of size and whiting it will be ready for use.

Ratlin.—A suitable costume for this wrecker will be a reefer-coat, with blue trousers tucked into top-boots, and a jersey. He should wear a sou'wester made according to the pattern shown in Fig. 13. Two pieces of brown paper or American cloth, shaped as at A, must be fastened together, with strips of the same material from B to C and from B to D, in the same manner as was adopted for the top-boots made for the Squire. Another piece of American cloth must then be cut, as at EF,

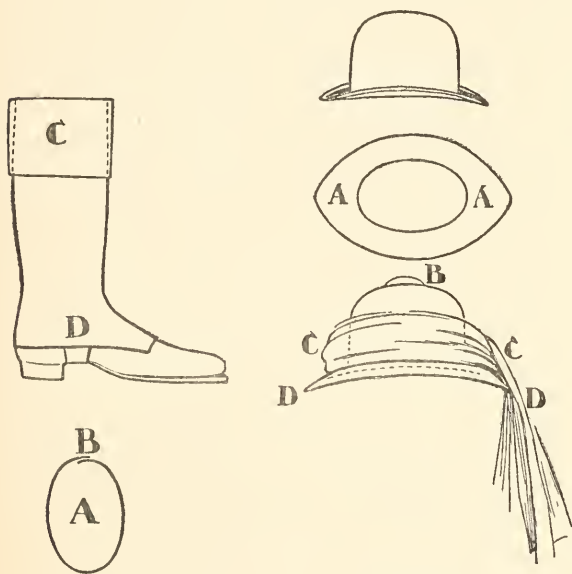


FIG. 11

FIG. 12

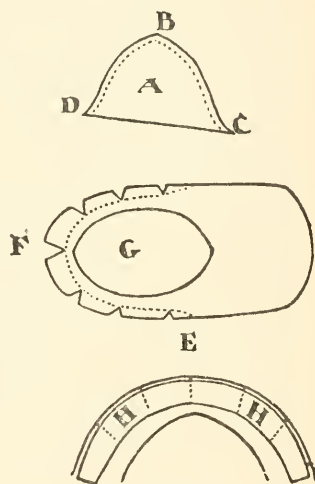


FIG. 13

the space G being just large enough to contain the head-piece already made. Cut notches along the front brim, as shown in the diagram, so that when these are bent up they can be glued to a piece of the same material, HH, thus making the semblance to an upturned brim. A black bushy beard will complete Ratlin's make-up.

The Wreckers.—The remaining wreckers may be dressed in jerseys and top-boots, their heads being covered with stocking caps. An unshaven appearance, lending an air of ferocity, can be produced by blueing round the chin and cheeks.

Blowhard.—The bos'n should wear a peaked cap, reefer-coat, blue trousers, and have a red scarf round his neck. His appearance will be improved by the addition of a red monkey-beard—*i.e.* a beard passing under the chin and jaws, leaving the mouth quite free. This can be kept in position by an elastic over the head, and should be procurable for about a shilling.

The Three Moors.—These gentry should wear red fez caps with long tassels. They can be purchased very cheaply, but they can also be made very easily by

cutting a piece of card, as shown at BB, Fig. 14, bending it round and gluing the joint. A black tassel, A, can be sewn to the cloth top which, with the covering of the cardboard, should be of red cloth.

The remainder of the costume should consist of a cassock-shaped garment with a large sash round the waist, the whole being covered with a large-sleeved surcoat. The difficulty of making this dress can be obviated, if desired, by wrapping a sheet round the body in such a manner that it falls in folds and leaves the arms fairly free. On the feet red shoes must be worn. The faces and hands can be blacked with a special preparation, sold in large tubes, the mixture being worked into every crease in the face. As Moors have none of the attributes of negroes, there need be no attempt to red the lips or mouth.

Stephen Sink.—The Kaid will be dressed like the other Moors, except that he will wear a white band round his fez, C, Fig. 14.

The Sultan.—The only difference in the Sultan's costume will be that in place of the fez he will wear a large white turban, made by winding a sash around the fez, as in D, Fig. 14. In his turban should be placed a gilt crescent.

Gaffer Stacker.—This is an old countryman, who may wear a white monkey-beard and have hollow cheeks. His dress should consist of a smock-frock, black top-hat with the nap rubbed the wrong way, gaiters, large boots, and a red handkerchief round his neck.

Doris.—The Squire's daughter needs no special costume. A French grey frock with a lace fichu tucked in at the waist, a bunch of poppies, and a large straw hat trimmed with corn and poppies will make a good dress for Act I. Her second costume should be all white, and she might wear a large mushroom hat to withstand the African sun.

The Village Girls.—Similar dresses to that described above will prove suitable for the village girls. When dancing round the Maypole, however, ordinary flowered muslin or print frocks will be quite good enough for them to wear, and, as they are poor girls, there is no need to make them as neat and dainty as Mistress Doris.

The Herald's Song should be sung as a Prologue before the rising of the curtain. The Herald, who can be dressed in a large red over-all and must carry a long trumpet, can come on the stage in front of the curtain and sing his song to the audience, the refrain being taken up from the wings.

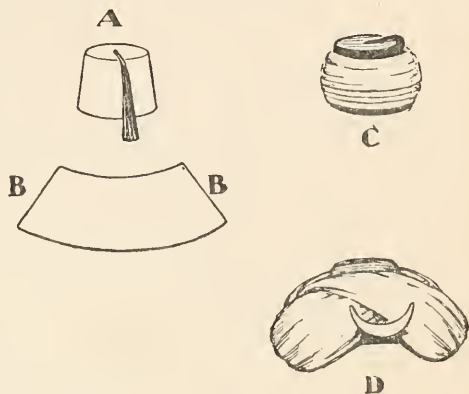


FIG. 14

THICKHEAD

ACT I.—*The Village Green.*ACT II.—*Outside the Moorish Stronghold.*ACT III.—*The same as last.*

CHARACTERS.

BURGESS, *a Village Lad.*

BUCKET

BIT } *Other Village Lads.*

PAIL

T'OULD SQUIRE WAINSCOTT.

MR. WILLIAM RATLIN, *Wrecker.*

BRINEY JOE

LANDSMAN JIM } *Other Wreckers.*

CUTLASS PETER

BLOWHARD.

KAID STEPHEN SINK.

DUSKY DESMOND

BLACK MICHAEL } *Moors.*

MURKY MUSTAPHA

SULTAN OF MOROCCO.

GAFFER STACKER.

ANNETTE

LISETTE } *Village Girls.*

JULIA

DORIS, *T'Ould Squire's Daughter.*

THE HERALD'S SONG

1. I am a her - ald, who Has come from Her - ald's Col - lege; Of
 2. A gal - lant squire will go Up - on the field of bat - tle, Brings
 3. In the castle of my liege, Round which the foe is wait - ing, They

what a knight should do
to the ground his foe,
say, "We'll take by siege!"

I have a per - fect know-ledge: I
And makes his ar - mour rat - tle. "My
I an-swer through the grat - ing. With

make your ped - i - gree—
sword!" his mon-arch cries,
draw-bridge up we stay;

You have it or you lump it; I
And hits him on the crum-pet; "Sir
The moat, they can-not jump it; And

Refrain.

take a big - gish fee,
Knight," he says, "A - rise!"
soon they march a - way,

And then I blow my trum-pet, }
And then I blow my trum-pet, } Ta
And then I blow my trum-pet, }

col 8va.

ra, Ta ra. And then he blows his trum-pet.

D.S.

ACT I

Curtain up on VILLAGE GIRLS and BOYS dancing round May-pole. ANNETTE, PAIL, JULIA, BUCKET, LISETTE, GAFFER, BIT.

(After Dance.)

Bit. That was good !

Julia. Better than usual !

Gaffer. Oh ay ! Pleasure is all that the young folks think about nowadays !

Annette. I know why we danced so well to-day !

All. Why ?

Annette. Because Burgess wasn't here.

Bucket. Burgess is no dancer.

Pail. He can't learn the steps.

Annette and Lisette. Burgess has a thickhead !

Bucket. Burgess is melancholy !

Annette. Burgess is in love !

Pail. Hist ! Here comes T'Ould Squire.

Enter T'OULD SQUIRE WAINSCOTT.

All. Hurrah for T'Ould Squire !

Squire. Welcome. I heard the music, and came to watch the dance. Besides, do you know what day this is ?

All. Saturday.

Gaffer. And to-morrow's Michael-mas.

Squire. My daughter's birthday.

Gaffer. The day when I pay my rent.

Bucket. Doris, hurrah!

All. Hurrah!

Squire. On with the dance! Are you all here?

All. All!

Annette. Except——

Squire. Yes.

Gaffer. Hush!

Lisette. We don't like to say!

Squire. What?

Bucket. You said we were never to mention his name in your presence.

Squire. You mean that thick-headed Burgess? (*ALL nod.*) True—I am displeased with Burgess.

Bucket. I don't wonder—the cricket-match——

Pail. T'Ould Squire was batting. We wanted one run to win——

Bucket. Burgess was the umpire.

Annette. T'Ould Squire got in front of his wicket.

Lisette. The ball hit T'Ould Squire's leg.

Gaffer. The bowler said, "How's that?" T'Ould Squire said, "Keep cool, Burgess. Don't hesitate to give me out if I am out, or in if I am in." And Burgess said, "Out."

Annette and Lisette. The thick-head!

Squire. But to-day is Doris's birthday, and I forgive him.

All. How generous!

Gaffer. And what about my rent?

[*ALL to places for dance. Music soft.*]

Enter BURGESS with bunch of flowers and sheet of paper which he reads through.

MUSIC.

Burgess (reading).

I never yet did see any
Blue eyes as hers so blue,
Her lips are red; no peony
So scarlet ever——

Boys and Girls. Burgess!

Burgess. Greeting! "So scarlet ever——"

Squire. Burgess!

Burgess. Oh! [*Prepares to go.*]

Boys and Girls. Come back!

Annette. T'Ould Squire has forgiven you.

Squire. Burgess, the past must be forgotten. This is my daughter's——

Burgess. Birthday!

Boys and Girls. You knew that?

Squire. Who told you?

Burgess. I knew it! I was in the fields at daybreak. The birds broke into song; they sang, "It is Doris's birthday." The light breeze; the whisper in the tree-tops; the scented flowers and the fragrant earth—yes, they all had their message. Thus, Squire Wainscott, thus was I told.

[*During this speech BOYS and GIRLS retreat, staring L. SQUIRE, R. At end of speech BURGESS remains down centre, and SQUIRE tiptoes across to BOYS and GIRLS.*]

Squire (aside). He's not well!
(*Aloud.*) Burgess, my lad, you've been overdoing it. Come, join the dance.

Burgess. But——

Squire. No, I'll take no refusal!

[*Maypole dance. After a few bars BURGESS goes completely wrong, and the dance ends in confusion.*]

All. Stop!

Squire. It was your fault, Burgess. Why can't you do it properly?

Burgess. Don't know.

Squire. Boys and girls, who's for a game of hide-and-seek? (To BURGESS.) Thickhead!

HIDE-AND-SEEK



1. Do not be too long de - cid - ing, When your turn comes to go hid - ing,
2. Shouts that reach you from the thick - ly Wo - ven leaves will tell you quick - ly



For we count but fif - ty se - conds Ere we fol - low on your trail.
That the chase has start - ed, and Al - rea - dy some one has been found.



You had best be quick-ly start-ing, In pur-suit we'll soon be part-ing—
Foot-steps now come round your shel-ter To and fro, and hel-ter skel-ter;

Search-ing hith-er, This way, that way, Search-ing thith-er, Grow-ing faint-er—

rall. CHORUS.
Search-ing hedge-row, hill, and dale. } Hide-and-seek, Hide-and-seek,
Faint-er till there is no sound. }

If you're hid-ing you must not speak ; Wheth-er you've chos-en

This system contains the first three measures of the piece. The vocal line begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: "If you're hid-ing you must not speak ; Wheth-er you've chos-en". The piano accompaniment consists of two staves, treble and bass, with a grand staff brace on the left. The piano part features chords and moving lines in both hands.

glade or glen, Wait till you get a chance, and then If you

This system contains measures 4 through 6. The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "glade or glen, Wait till you get a chance, and then If you". The piano accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines in both hands.

think you won't be seen Home-wards go,

This system contains measures 7 through 9. The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "think you won't be seen Home-wards go,". The piano accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines in both hands. A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) appears in the piano part.



[*Exeunt* SQUIRE, BOYS, and GIRLS.
Burgess. Always the same. Just
 thickhead—nothing more
 Or less—dire day!—oh, hateful
 cricket-match!

Why did I stand as umpire, know-
 ing not
 The subtle rules that govern leg
 before?

T'Ould Squire is cruel. Aye, and
 he's unjust!

Yet stay; he's father of my Doris—

[*DORIS heard off.*

Doris. I'm ready!

Burgess (aside). 'Tis she!

Enter DORIS.

Doris, she
 For whom there's naught I would
 not suffer willingly.

Doris. Giving way to blank-verse
 again, Burgess?

Burgess. Most often let this happy
 day return.

Doris. Thank you. But do speak
 to me in ordinary prose.

*Burgess (glancing at the sheet of
 paper).* Do you really insist on that?

Doris. Please.

Burgess. You—you don't know
 what you ask—

Doris. I have no need. I ask and
 you—

Burgess (crumpling paper). Obey.

Doris. Of course. Those flowers?

Burgess. I gathered them for
 you.

Doris. They're sweet!

Burgess. At early dawn I saw the
 poppy field all wet with dew; I
 hurried out—

Doris. Oh, look at your hair!

Burgess. Hair? Why?

Doris. It's frightfully untidy.

Burgess. What am I to do?

Doris. It's the fault of all your
 poetry, you know. Try some sort
 of pomade.

Burgess. Pomade?

Doris. I'll tell you how to make a
 good one.

Burgess. Yes?

Doris. Some salad-oil. You'll find
 that—

Burgess. I know! In T'Ould
 Squire's cricket-bag. [*Opens it.*

Doris. The salad-oil has a calming
 effect on one's hair. But that is not

enough. You must send it to sleep. A poppy——

[*Gives him one. Another falls to the ground.*]

Burgess. Why?

Doris. There is opium in a poppy. Crush it, and add the oil in the palm of your hand.

Burgess. And now——

Doris. Smear the mixture on your head. That's right. Smear, Burgess, smear.

Burgess. I am smearing, Doris.

Doris. It's lovely! You look different already. Burgess, promise me you'll do it every morning.

Burgess. I promise.

[*Refrain of "Hide-and-Seek" sung softly off.*]

Doris. I musn't be caught. (*Holds out her hand.*) O Burgess, don't catch me!

Burgess. Yes, but I——

Doris. You were not on the green, you know!

Burgess. No; I suppose it would be unfair.

Doris. Very unfair!

[*BOYS and GIRLS heard off approaching.*]

Burgess. It would be cheating.

[*Voices off, "Doris! Doris!"*]

Doris. Yes; cheating, thickhead.

[*Exit DORIS.*]

Burgess. Thickhead! What have I done?

*Enter GIRLS and BOYS,
SQUIRE, &c.*

The village girls and boys—T'Ould Squire—Doris—oh, I cannot stay!

[*BURGESS stands moodily up stage, L., whilst GIRLS, BOYS, and T'OULD SQUIRE cross the stage in high spirits and go off L.C. Then symphony for entrance of WILLIAM RATLIN. After symphony, entrance (R.) of RATLIN, BLOWHARD, and WRECKERS. BLOWHARD'S whistle has placard. They parade round stage to repeated symphony. Then RATLIN'S song:—*]

THE WRECKER



THICKHEAD

51

1. I'm a des - per - a - do, And
2. I've had my disappointments; I re -

of - ten, when I see My fea - tures in the look - ing glass, I
mem - ber well the day, When I lured a car - go ves - sel Till she

trem - ble at the knee. When I gaze at my re - flec - tion I'm
groun - ded in the bay. She was full of suits of cloth - ing, I said,

filled with si - lent dread, It has woke me screaming, screaming, screaming,
 "Bo' - s'n, here's a kit For you and me, and all of us," But

crescendo

CHORUS.

Scream-ing in my bed. }
 none of them would fit. }

I'm a wreck-er ; yes, I am ! (Yes, he

f
trem.

is !) I'm a wreck-er pure and sim - ple ! (That is so !)

I'm a

hor-ri - ble sight when I'm out at night To lure the ships on

This system contains the first two lines of the musical score. The top line is a vocal melody in G major (one flat) with lyrics 'hor-ri - ble sight when I'm out at night To lure the ships on'. The bottom line is a piano accompaniment in G major, featuring a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand.

shore. To the rocks—(He is oft on the rocks)— I

This system contains the next two lines of the musical score. The vocal melody continues with the lyrics 'shore. To the rocks—(He is oft on the rocks)— I'. The piano accompaniment continues with similar harmonic support, including some arpeggiated figures in the right hand.

go with my vil-lain-ous band ; I toil by stealth at the

rall.

This system contains the final two lines of the musical score. The vocal melody concludes with the lyrics 'go with my vil-lain-ous band ; I toil by stealth at the'. The piano accompaniment features a more active, descending eighth-note pattern in the right hand. The system ends with a 'rall.' (rallentando) marking and a series of dotted lines indicating a slow fade-out.



Ratlin. Any wrecks in sight, bo's'n? (*BLOWHARD blows once and shows placard.*) Any wrecks, I said. Are there any? Ye bulwarks and bowsprits! what's that placard?

Blowhard. A labour-saving device, Mr. William Ratlin.

Ratlin. "No"—1 whistle. "Yes"—2 whistles.

Blowhard. Just an idea.

Ratlin. Idea! It's insubordination!

Blowhard. I call it marching with the times.

Ratlin. It's mutiny! Ha!

[Sees BURGESS. *All WRECKERS creep up to BURGESS.*

Burgess (to himself). Thickhead!

Ratlin (aside). If he means that for me there will be trouble. (*Aloud.*) And you—what of you?

Burgess (unconscious of him). Thickhead!

Ratlin. Ah yes, yes! We must humour him! Probably his brain. (*Pats BURGESS'S head.*) Just as I

suspected; there's water on it. And now listen to me. Business is at a standstill. We make our fatal signals on yon jutting rock and the ships pass on.

Blowhard. The crews do oft make faces at us as they journey on their way.

Ratlin. Wrecking is a decaying industry.

Blowhard. Aye! We will go abroad.

Ratlin. Oh, native land, thou sendest forth the fairest of thy sons!

All. Aye, aye!

Blowhard. But where?

Ratlin. I have heard that in Morocco there is very excellent wrecking. At every lantern flash you get an unsophisticated craft.

Blowhard. Oh, Mr. William Ratlin!

Ratlin. In fact, you can hardly strike a match without luring some valuable ship upon the rocks. You'll come?

Wreckers. Yes.

[BLOWHARD whistles twice.

Burgess. And I'll join you.

Blowhard. You come, and welcome, sir.

Ratlin. Aye! But remember ours is fierce and horrid work, and recollect that we are very reckless men. [ALL laugh.

Blowhard. Reckless! That's good! No wrecks, you understand.

[ALL laugh.
Ratlin. Enough! A passing pleasantry. And now, Mr. —

Burgess. My name is Burgess.

Ratlin. Mr. Burgess, sir. It's like this, we can't get hold of no wrecks. Held a lantern till my arms are fit to drop night after night.

Burgess. And no luck?

Ratlin. Nice collection of moths, and pretty enough creatures they are too, in their way, Mr. Burgess; but moths won't feed and clothe me and Blowhard and the boys—will they now?

[BLOWHARD whistles once.

Burgess. Then, Mr. William Ratlin, lead on—lead on, bold wrecker, to Morocco's shore!

[EXEUNT RATLIN, BLOWHARD, and WRECKERS.

Burgess. The oil—a poppy, from whose seeds will spring More poppies to compound each day's pomade.

Enter DORIS.

Doris, good-bye! [Exit BURGESS.

Doris (she waits till he is out of sight). I will forgive him when I see him next. Oh, how I'll tease

him! And yet I wish he had not gone.

Enter BOYS and GIRLS.

All. Where's Burgess.

Bucket. I see him yonder in the distance.

Annette. With Mr. William Ratlin.

All. And Blowhard and the wreckers.

Annette. They're putting out to sea.

Doris. To sea!

All. We'll go to the beach to say farewell.

Doris. O Burgess, I didn't mean it! Come back! (Pause.) The anchor's weighed! [Sobs.

Enter SQUIRE.

Squire. Doris in tears! Has something happened?

Doris. Nothing. It's Burgess! I—I detest him so!

Squire. You want a change, a complete change of air. Burgess has quite got on your nerves. What do you say to a cruise in the yacht?

Doris. Yes.

Squire. Abroad! The mysterious East! Morocco!

Doris. Yes.

Enter GAFFER.

Gaffer. Squire, my young apprentice has left his forge.

Enter BOYS and GIRLS.

Boys and Girls. They're gone.

Squire. Boys and girls, a cruise to Morocco!

Gaffer. He's a limb! A limb!
And who's to do his work?

Squire. Gaffer, a trip on the ocean
will do *you* good!
All. Gaffer comes too!

STEP LIVELY

1. Oh, don't re - fuse To
2. We sail for miles, The

take a cruise In my yacht so spick and span. She's
Brit - ish Isles We leave be - hind us when We're

trim and taut And all she ought To be. And ev' - ry man, Shall
on the track Of Moors all black, And great big drag - o - men. They

sing "Heave ho!" or go be - low If he is feel - ing queer. Or
use burnt cork, They can - not talk, They point at you and howl; Bag

if you dare Face *mal - de - mer*, Then work the schoo - ner's gear!
all you've got, And as it's hot They on - ly wear a towel!

CHORUS.

Step live - ly! Step live - ly! And turn the cap - stan round! Step

live - ly ! Step live - ly ! I think we've run a - ground ! Be -

lay there ! A - vast there ! We're run - ning East, and we Shall

short-ly reach Mor - roc - co's beach, That land of mys - ter - y !

Squire. And we'll forget this
thickhead Burgess.
Boys and Girls. Yes.

Doris. Forget !

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Outside Moorish stronghold. Curtain up on MOORS and SULTAN.*

Moors (to SULTAN). Salaam!

Kaid. We fear an attack, O Sultan!

Sultan. You mean those wrecker

dogs? Have you made the usual preparations?

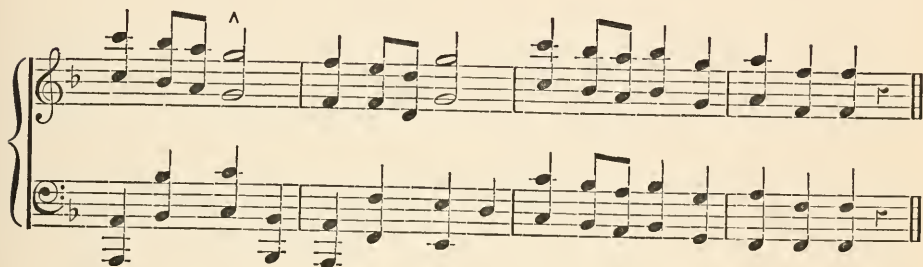
Dusky Desmond. Yes, O Sultan!

Kaid. He means the molten lead.

Dusky Desmond. The molten lead is here.

All. Salaam!

[*Exit MOORS and SULTAN.*]



Enter WRECKERS.

Briney Joe. Mr. William Ratlin has brought us here under false pretences. We starve!

All. Aye! aye!

Briney Joe. And I say, "Down with Ratlin!"

All. Down with——

Enter BLOWHARD.

Blowhard. The gramophone is now working. Listen. (*Gramophone heard off, "Come and be wrecked!"*) But you were saying, "Down with——"

Enter RATLIN.

Ratlin. Things are bad—about as bad as they can be! A week in Morocco—not a single wreck, the Kaid getting uppish—(*points to for-*

tress)—and the daily menu limited to a few dates. I'm very tired of dates, aren't you, Blowhard? (*BLOWHARD whistles twice.*) Breakfast in Morocco is like chewing the bones of history. That's well put, isn't it, Blowhard? (*BLOWHARD whistles once.*) Yes, it is, only your head is nearly as thick as Burgess's. Dates are the bones of history. You follow me, Blowhard? (*BLOWHARD whistles once.*) Oh, you don't? Well, all I can say is that for a man who doesn't like dates, you're making a pretty good breakfast. Giving way to gluttony, Blowhard; while I'm slaving at wrecking to support you. For shame! To your post on yonder beetling crag, and lure some vessel to the shore.

Blowhard. I have already seen to

the luring! (*Noise of gramophone off.*) Hush!

[*Gramophone off, "Come and be wrecked!"*]

Ratlin. Larboard, starboard and rotating lights! What means that cry?

Blowhard. Just another substitute for human toil. Briney, bring the gramophone.

Ratlin. Gramophone?

Blowhard (*receiving gramophone from BRINEY in FULL VIEW of audience*). I make the record; I set the clockwork going. The machine I place upon the rocks, and then I sleep.

All. We all sleep!

Blowhard. And while we sleep the ships are lured by the lethal voice of the deceptive machinery.

[*Gramophone: "Come and be wrecked!"*]

Ratlin. Well, it doesn't seem to work any way. (*BLOWHARD whistles twice and exits; at tent door.*) *Burgess!* (*No answer.*) *Burgess!*

Enter BURGESS with sheet of foolscap.

Burgess. "I never yet did see any——"

Ratlin. Had breakfast?

Burgess. No. "Blue eyes as hers so blue——"

Ratlin. Aren't you hungry?

Burgess. No. "Her lips are red. No peony——"

Ratlin. Slept well?

Burgess. Not a wink! "So scarlet ever——" It's that last line that beats me! What rhymes with "blue"?

Ratlin. Young man, don't you insult an honest wrecker! I'm not a poet. I'm a decently brought up, well-educated man, I am.

Burgess. I beg your pardon, Mr. William Ratlin. Shake hands!

Ratlin. Burgess, I like you. Hear my confidence. The men are dissatisfied. They murmur——

[*"Down with Ratlin!" heard off.*]

Burgess. I wish they wouldn't do that.

Ratlin. I don't enjoy it, you know.

Burgess. They disturb my thoughts. I'd almost got a rhyme——

[*Exit BURGESS into tent.*]

Ratlin. Be brave, William Ratlin—it's your only chance.

Enter WRECKERS.

Wreckers. Yah!

Ratlin. Come, come.

Wreckers. Yah!

Ratlin. Don't give way. All will come right. Meanwhile take a day's holiday, a cruise in the schooner. A picnic. Look, I've found some grapes——

Wreckers (*greedily*). Ah!

[*Exeunt WRECKERS.*]

Ratlin. I'd been looking forward to those grapes, but in this emergency—well, well, I never was a selfish man! *Burgess!*

Enter BURGESS.

If I'm not disturbing you—just a word.

Burgess. I'm at your service. The verse must wait. The mood's not on me! What is it, Ratlin?

Ratlin. I'm in a blue funk.

Burgess. Why, what's the matter?

Ratlin. Matter ! Ah, Burgess, I sometimes fancy your poetry gives you a sort of consolation !

Burgess. Ratlin, make no mistake. Poetry is not all jam. The life of a poet is like a policeman's—not a happy one.

Ratlin. On the other hand, you are saved a lot of worry. Your poetry doesn't leave you time to think how badly I've behaved to you.

Burgess. What have you done ?

Ratlin. I've brought you all the way to Morocco under my promise of making your fortune, and there hasn't been a single wreck. Besides, we are on the point of starvation.

Burgess. What do the men propose to do about it ?

Ratlin. There's a sort of idea of chucking me into the sea.

Burgess. Yes. And after that ?

Ratlin (shuddering). No ! no !

Burgess. Yes.

Ratlin. There are Moors inside it. A Kaid is in command, and I've heard they entertain no less a person than——

Burgess. Yes ?

Ratlin. The Sultan !

Burgess. Well, what's the idea ?

Ratlin. To attack the fortress and capture the Sultan ! Our position would be pretty strong if we did it !

Burgess. Do you dare ?

Ratlin. Between ourselves, I don't ; but circumstances are too much for me.

[Shout heard off, "Come and be wrecked !" A crash.

Enter BLOWHARD.

Ratlin and Burgess. Have you wrecked something ?

[BLOWHARD whistles twice.

Ratlin. Well done !

Burgess. Congratulations !

Ratlin. Won't the lads be pleased ?
(Sneezing heard off.) Here they come !

Enter WRECKERS, dripping.

Burgess. Good news !

Ratlin. There's been a wreck !

[Exit BLOWHARD.

Wreckers. We know !

Burgess and Ratlin. How ?

Wreckers. We are the wreck !
Blowhard has wrecked us.

Ratlin. Blowhard ! Where is he ?

Wreckers. And now, Ratlin, we are going to throw you into the sea !

Ratlin. One moment ! Do you want an enormous fortune ?

Wreckers. Yes.

Ratlin. It's in that fortress. The Sultan's there ! Capture him and we're made for life !

Wreckers. We will !

Ratlin. Collect your arms and await the signal. It will be three notes on Blowhard's whistle. I will find the bo's'n and tell him when to give the sign.

[Exeunt RATLIN and WRECKERS.

Burgess. And I'll get ready for the fight. (Stands in tent door and begins to arm himself.) Aye, and I'll fight well.

If Doris stood beside me she would say,

"Be brave, be daring, Burgess,"
 even though
 She thought me Thickhead. Aye,
 so much I'll do
 For her alone. And for myself I'll
 add
 A force to ev'ry blow in desperate
 skill
 That shall preserve me while I ven-
 ture most.
 Oh! I'll not fail! No Moor shall
 lay me low.
 My life is not complete. Nor will
 be, till
 I've seen my Doris once again;
 and I

Have dreamt we two are yet again
 to meet.

Enter BLOWHARD.

Have you given the signal? (BLOW-
 HARD *whistles once.*) No. Then wait
 until I'm ready.

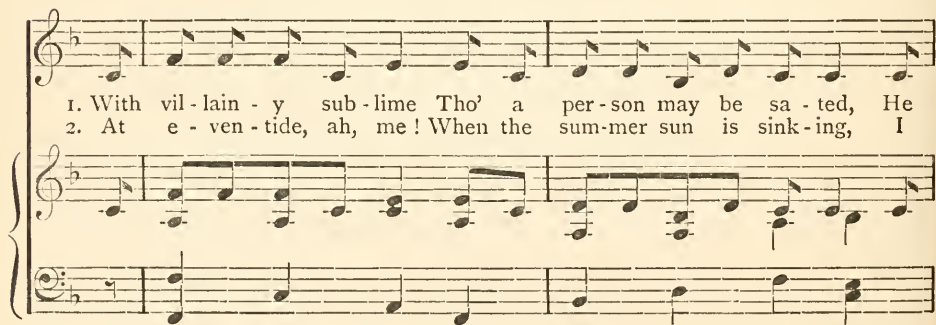
[BLOWHARD *whistles twice.*

Enter RATLIN.

Ratlin. Three whistles the signal!
 Death to the Moors! We attack
 the Moors from behind.

*Enter WRECKERS with flag,
 trumpets, and pistols.*

ENGLAND IS OVER THE SEA



THICKHEAD

63

has his weak - er moments, When his wick - ed breath is ba - ted, And
wan - der, fan - cy free, Think - ing, think - ing, think - ing, think - ing, While my

in those weak - er moments, E - ven scoundrels, such as me Al - ways
star is on the wane I grow triste, aye triste, aye trister, And I

rall.
vo - cal - ise con - cern - ing Their dear home - land o'er the sea.
mur - mur this re - frain 'Cause my pros - pect is si - nister.
colla voce.

the sea ;

Tempo di Valse.

Eng-land is o - ver the sea,..... Eng-land is

Tempo di Valse.

the sea.

o - ver the sea ;..... And those who are near me Break

down when they hear That Eng-land is o - ver the sea.....

pp

[BURGESS stops at tent door.

RATLIN down C. of stage.

WRECKERS march across stage. BLOWHARD joins them and marches at their head, R. *Exeunt* WRECKERS and BLOWHARD. Noise heard (R.) off.

Ratlin. Didn't you hear the signal, Burgess? Three whistles.

Burgess. No. You've made a mistake. It was only I and Blowhard chatting!

Ratlin. Can't be helped now. The thing must go on. Follow the lads!

Burgess. Not yet! My vow!

[Mixes pomade.

Ratlin. Your vow! This is no time for vows!

Burgess. Ratlin, I care not what you say. But ere I stir, my hair shall have, as it is wont, its morning smear of Doris's pomade.

Ratlin. You coward!

Burgess. No, my promise truly kept, I'll fire the lock of yonder frowning door!

Ratlin. What! You'd do that?

Burgess. Yes. With the oily lotion wet upon my head.

Ratlin. My post is with the lads.

[Exit RATLIN. *Slow music.*

Burgess. My promise. The pomade as Doris wished.

[Rubs pomade on his head.

Parts his hair before hand-

glass. Cocks his pistol. Ad-

vances to fortress door. Dis-

charges pistol. Retires R.

MOOR from window throws

property molten lead over him. BURGESS falls, crawls to side.

Moor. Ha, ha! The molten lead has done its work.

Enter WRECKERS. BLOWHARD and RATLIN, R. Enter MOORS from fortress doors, headed by KAID. All go L., fighting. Enter BURGESS, with silver cap.

Kaid. Surrender, foreign dogs!

Burgess. Never! No!

Wreckers and Ratlin. Yes!

Burgess. You cowards!

Ratlin. Don't take any notice of him, Kaid. We surrender.

Kaid. That is good! (*Points to BURGESS, who is still fighting.*) Bind him!

[BURGESS is bound.

Enter SULTAN.

Sultan. They're brawny, stalwart men! We may have use for them! They shall join us!

Kaid. The Sultan spares you.

Sultan. But they must be black!

Wreckers. Yes. We will be black.

[BLOWHARD whistles twice.

WRECKERS begin to black their faces.

Burgess. But I refuse!

Moors. You won't!

Ratlin. There's plenty of burnt cork. Don't be silly, Burgess.

Burgess. Not fifty thousand Moors could make me rub

That burnt-cork pigment, Ratlin, o'er my face!

Dusky Desmond. Why not?

Burgess. 'Twould pain my Doris

if she ever saw my skin all black like Stephen's ink.

Kaid. Did you say Stephen Sink?

Burgess. I did!

All. You've done it, Burgess!

Ratlin. What a tactless thing to say!

Dusky Desmond (to MOORS). Knock him over the head!

[*All MOORS hit in unison.*]

All. That's settled Burgess!

Burgess. Never felt better in my life!

Dusky Desmond. What does it mean?

[*RATLIN and BURGESS talk aside.*]

Burgess. The pomade saved me. The molten lead has hardened.

Ratlin. Let me look. You've indeed got a thick head.

Sultan (to MOORS). You hit him and yet he lives. He is not human! Treat him with reverence!

Moors. Shall he be our Kaid?

Kaid. No!

Sultan (to KAID). Efface yourself! Hereafter he is Kaid. (*To BURGESS.*) Most distinguished one!

Ratlin. That's you!

Kaid. It's most unfair!

[*Moorish tune.*]

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

Outside Moorish Stronghold. KAID discovered.

Kaid. That's right, drown them all! Drown them! They'll pay a ransom. Nonsense! It's the principle of the thing.

Enter MOORS.

Dusky Desmond. We've done it.

Enter BURGESS.

Burgess. Horrible! Their shrieks will haunt me. [*Exit BURGESS.*]

Kaid. What's the matter with Kaid Burgess?

Dusky Desmond. He seems upset.

Enter SULTAN, unseen.

Kaid. I don't want to say a word against Burgess.

Dusky Desmond. No, no.

Kaid. Far be it from me to speak unkindly of him.

Dusky Desmond. Yes, yes.

Kaid. But I put it to you as sensible men.

Dusky Desmond. Yes, yes.

Kaid. As true-hearted blackguards.

Dusky Desmond. Yes, yes.

Kaid. He's not up to his work.

Dusky Desmond. There's something in what you say.

Kaid. Now, when I was Kaid, did you ever see me shrink from slaughter?

Dusky Desmond. No, no.

Kaid. I revelled in it. Of course, I don't say I'm more fitted for the position than Burgess is—

Dusky Desmond. Yes, yes, you are.

Kaid. Anyhow, let's talk it over quietly. The very walls have ears.

[*SULTAN hides. Exeunt KAID and MOORS.*]

Sultan. Treason, high-coloured as the deep magnetic night. Shall I destroy this Stephen Sink? Shall I put poison in his sherbet? No.

He shall have another chance. But he must be warned. (*Produces pencil and paper and writes.*) "The Sultan knows all. Stephen Sink, be careful!" (*Puts paper into a banana skin and writes.*) "This banana is for Stephen Sink." William Ratlin has a certain verbal wit, but mine is grimmer. But hush, I hear him now!

[*Exit SULTAN.*]

Enter RATLIN.

Ratlin. Don't know how to load your guns? Then stab, or hack them to bits. What's wrong with you, Burgess? No, no, Dusky Desmond, stand back. Kaid Burgess is entitled to the first stab; oh, you're hacking! Well, the first hack, then. It makes no difference. Not the slightest.

Enter WRECKERS.

Wreckers. We've done it.

[*BLOWHARD whistles twice.*]

Enter BURGESS.

Burgess. Their groans! Their groans!

[*Exit BURGESS.*]

Ratlin. It may be that his health's impaired.

Bo's'n. He eats well.

Ratlin. Too much date diet.

Briney Joe. Maybe.

Ratlin. But that's taking a charitable view of the case.

Bo's'n. You mean?

Ratlin. Well, I question whether Burgess is really the right man for the place.

Briney Joe. A trifle——

Ratlin. Squeamish. That's what

Burgess is, squeamish. Now, I may have my faults, but squeamishness is not one of them.

Wreckers. Good old Ratlin!

Ratlin. Of course, I don't want to push myself forward——

Wreckers. Ratlin shall be Kaid!

Ratlin (aside). Whatever put that idea in your heads. (*Aloud.*) But it *would* be a joke, wouldn't it? But hush! as dear old Burgess would say——

"Oh, silence, for the very lichened walls

Are like a field of corn—all ears."

[*Exeunt RATLIN and WRECKERS.*]

SONG.—(*"England is over the Sea"*).

Enter SULTAN.

Sultan. Yon straw-stuffed lantern-holder would depose most Reverend Burgess. Poor fool! My will is law. I'll play with foolish Ratlin. I will amuse myself. (*Produces paper and pencil and writes.*) "The Sultan knows all. Wrecker Ratlin, beware!" (*Puts paper in glass of sherbet.*) My humour is to put it in this glass of sherbet. (*Writes.*) "This sherbet is for Wrecker Ratlin." (*Puts sherbet aside.*) Oh tremble, Ratlin, when a Sultan jokes.

[*SULTAN hides.*]

Enter RATLIN, WRECKERS, KAID, MOORS, and BURGESS.

Burgess. There's no doubt it's a great honour being Kaid, but to my mind the work is too bloodthirsty.

[*Exit BURGESS.*]

Ratlin (to WRECKERS). Very well, it's definitely decided that you make

me Kaid; I will reward you. That is, I *would* reward you—if I had something to give you.

Bo's'n. We've made a mistake.

Ratlin. No, no. I'll give you—
(*hunts round and finds the sherbet*)—
this sherbet.

Wreckers. That's not much of a reward.

[*RATLIN and WRECKERS crowd round sherbet, murmuring.*]

Kaid (to *MOORS*). O children of a dingy hue, it is good. I, Stephen Sink, will once more be your leader. I'd give you largess if I could.

Moors. No largess!

[*Turning to go.*]

Kaid. Yes, yes. (*Aside.*) I must find something. (*Sees banana.*) This banana.

Dusky Desmond. It is a bagatelle. He trifles with us.

[*Crowd round KAID, murmuring.*]

Wreckers and Moors. What's this?

[*Find papers.*]

Ratlin and Kaid. A paper.

Briney Joe and Dusky Desmond.
Read it.

Ratlin and Kaid. "The Sultan knows all. Wrecker Ratlin, Stephen Sink, be careful!"

All. Ah! We are lost!

Sultan. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit SULTAN.*]

All. All is discovered. Where's Burgess?

Ratlin. Burgess is a born leader of men.

Kaid. Honourable Burgess is the ideal adventurer.

Enter BURGESS.

All. Your humble servant, Kaid Burgess.

[*SULTAN heard off, "Ha, ha!"*]

Burgess. Can't get that rhyme yet.

[*BLOWHARD heard off, "Come and be wrecked!" Crash.*]

All. A wreck! Come to the beach!

[*Exeunt ALL, except BURGESS.*]

Burgess. I shan't. Just my luck! I'd almost got that rhyme then.

Enter RATLIN.

Ratlin. Oh, while I think of it, Burgess, Stephen Sink is trying to get your job. I thought I'd just mention the matter.

Burgess. He's welcome to it, Ratlin.

Ratlin. But he's not worthy. No, no, I'm on your side, and if you have a chance, you might tell the Sultan what I've said.

[*Exit RATLIN.*]

Burgess. Good, loyal Ratlin!

Enter KAID.

Kaid. Exalted One, thy ear. Ratlin, the traitor, would seize the kaidship for himself. Be warned!

Burgess. What a curious thing!

Kaid. Resist him, O Most Superior Person. I am your big supporter. And please to let the Sultan know it.

[*Exit KAID.*]

Burgess. Another loyal follower.

Enter MOORS, WRECKERS, KAID, RATLIN.

[*Exit BURGESS.*]

All. The prisoners!

Enter SQUIRE, DORIS, GIRLS
and BOYS.

Squire. What means this treatment?

Ratlin. Don't hurry to kill them,
Burgess.

Ratlin and Kaid. A trap. You are doomed.

Squire. Caught on the boundary.

Doris. Oh, what are we to do!

[*Exeunt* WRECKERS, MOORS,
and T'OULD SQUIRE.]

TRUST THE SIZE OF THE EYES

Boys.

1. Do you think that they would sof - ten If we
2. We're a - fraid this is a cri - sis Where our

ask them ve - ry of - ten? Mere re - pe - ti - tion would not do us
mas - cu - line de - vi - ces Such ask knocking people over will not

HOME PLAYS

GIRLS.

good.
act.

But if
The

we three lit - tle miss-es Pro-mised
way to meet the case is, Trust up -

each of them our kiss-es, Then we think it's high-ly prob-a - ble they
on our pret - ty fa - ces, They've a charm that's ne - ver fail - ing to at -

would.
tract.

Then we think it's high-ly prob-a - ble they would.
They've a charm that's ne-ve-r fail-ing to at - tract.

THICKHEAD

71

BOYS AND GIRLS.

Trust the size Of the eyes Of a pre-pos-sess-ing maid-en, Who

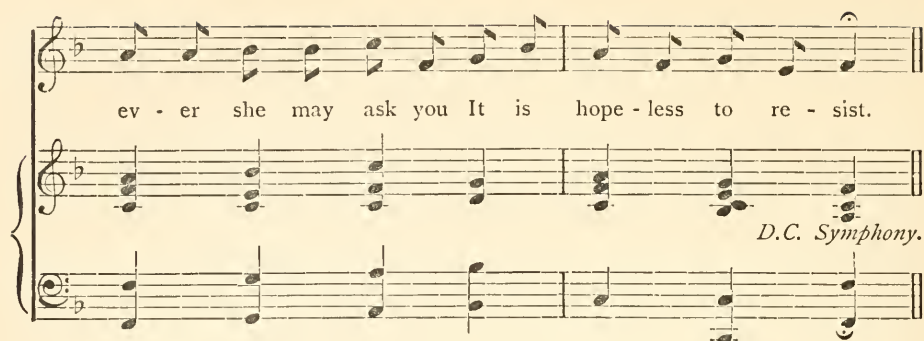
The first system of the musical score for 'Thickhead'. It consists of three staves: a vocal line in treble clef, a piano accompaniment in treble clef, and a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The vocal line begins with a quarter rest followed by a dotted quarter note, then continues with eighth and quarter notes. The piano accompaniment features chords and moving lines in both hands.

gives you the im - pres-sion You may pos - si - bly be kissed; And you'll

The second system of the musical score. The vocal line continues with eighth and quarter notes. The piano accompaniment maintains its harmonic support with chords and moving lines.

find That you're blind To the faults with which she's lad - en, And what-

The third system of the musical score. The vocal line continues with eighth and quarter notes. The piano accompaniment maintains its harmonic support with chords and moving lines.



Ratlin. Their eyes certainly have a sort of—well, you know what I mean.

Kaid. I begin to be fascinated.

Ratlin and Kaid. Blindfold the girls quick.

[*The GIRLS are blindfolded.*]

Ratlin. Tie them up to this tree.

Kaid. And let us not look upon them. [*Exeunt RATLIN and KAID.*]

Annette. I suppose there's no hope.

Lisette. There's no one to help us.

Doris. If Burgess were here.

Enter BURGESS.

Burgess. I thought I heard my name.

Doris. Yes, if Burgess were here.

Burgess. Doris!

Annette and Lisette. The thick-head!

Doris. Thickhead, yes. But who are you?

Burgess. A friend of Burgess!

Doris. A friend of Burgess! Is he well?

Burgess. Yes, but he is melancholy; he is in love.

Doris. He has forgotten me.

Burgess. That pomade——

Doris. A poppy.

Burgess. And salad-oil.

Doris. He promised he would always smear it on his head.

Burgess. He used to smear——

Doris. But now?

Burgess. No.

Doris. There was a poem——

Burgess. It is unfinished.

Doris. "I never yet did see any——

Burgess. Blue eyes as her's so blue——

Doris. Her lips are red. No peony——

Burgess. So scarlet ever——"

Doris. Yes, that was Burgess's poem.

Burgess. Why could he not complete it?

Doris. I do not know.

Burgess. I can tell you.

Doris. You?

Burgess. Because it stood for your love, and love was not complete.

Doris. Not then; but he went away, and my love for Burgess——

Burgess. Yes?

Doris. Grew.

Burgess. The rhyme! the very rhyme!

"Her lips are red, no peony
So scarlet—ever grew."

Doris. Burgess!

Burgess. Yes.

Doris. We have met again too late.

Burgess. Too late?

Doris. We are doomed. We are in the hands of the Moors and the Kaid.

Burgess. Hush! Do you think I would let harm come to you? Sleep, Doris, for you are safe while I have life.

Doris. Good-night, Burgess.

[*DORIS sleeps.*]

Burgess. She sleeps, in confidence that I— Steady, Burgess, she likes ordinary prose, and that was within a foot of a hexameter. (*Sits by tent facing audience, down stage.*) I must think out some plan for her escape.

Enter SQUIRE and SULTAN.

Sultan. Is that head of his really superhuman? I will put it to the test. Oh, how my nature revels in intrigue. You wonder why I have cut your bonds and helped you to elude the sentinel?

Squire. Pure good-nature.

Sultan. Yes.

Squire. Yes—but will you let us go?

Sultan. On one condition. First kill the Kaid by hitting him over the head.

Squire. You've a quaint idea of fun, but I'll do it.

Sultan. Quietly. [*SQUIRE strikes.*]

Burgess. Troublesome little creatures, mosquitoes.

Sultan. Again. [*SQUIRE strikes.*]

Burgess. The pests of the East.

Squire. Is he human?

Sultan. Ha, ha, it doesn't look like it, does it? I say, Burgess, here's an honourable sir who's trying to kill you.

Squire. Burgess?

Burgess. T'Ould Squire! Not a word.

Sultan. Shoot him down at your honourable convenience.

Burgess. I will deal with him, Sultan.

Sultan. Another victim to my passion for intrigue. [*Exit SULTAN.*]

Burgess. You always disliked me, but isn't this carrying the thing a little too far?

Squire. You always had a thick head, but I never knew it was as thick as this.

Burgess. What harm have I done you?

Squire. You gave me out, leg before wicket.

Burgess. It rankles still?

Squire. A true cricketer never forgets a thing of that sort.

Burgess. And is that all you have against me?

Squire. No, there is something more. You used to make yourself such a nuisance to Doris. I can't forgive you for that.

Burgess. Can you forgive yourself for bringing her here?

Squire. Burgess, stop. I can't bear it.

Burgess. The danger she is in—

Squire. I know. But how was I to foresee—she was miserable at home.

Burgess. Is that the reason you sailed here to Morocco?

Squire. The only reason.

Burgess. Then the fault was mine—not yours.

Squire. No, I take the blame. It is through me that she is now at the mercy of those scoundrels.

Burgess. Suppose I saved her?

Squire. You save her! You're a poet.

Burgess. T'Ould Squire, I *will* save her.

Squire. But you've got such a thick head!

Burgess. Yes, thicker than when you knew me first. I glory in it. It was through the thickness of my head that I am now a Kaid. And because I now am Kaid I think that I can save her.

Squire. Burgess, I begin to think you are not speaking idly. Do it, and I'll put in a word for you with Doris.

Burgess. Thanks. And now back to your place. I must carry out my plan. [Exit SQUIRE.]

Burgess. Sultan.

Enter SULTAN.

Sultan. Illustrious One, I am here.

Burgess. If you want to see a really good joke, give me your support.

Sultan. You have it.

Burgess. Conceal yourself and watch. [Exit SULTAN.]

Burgess. Ratlin.

Enter RATLIN.

Burgess. Ratlin, the Sultan heard your men were mutinous. He was displeased.

Ratlin. I gathered that from the sherbet.

Burgess. You'd better not be mixed up in it, so prove your loyalty by disarming them.

Ratlin. Good idea. I will.

[Exit RATLIN.]

Sultan. Is this part of the joke?

Burgess. Yes, but seek concealment. Ex-Kaid!

Enter KAID.

Ex-Kaid, the Sultan heard your men were mutinous. He was displeased.

Kaid. I gathered that from the banana.

Burgess. You'd better not be mixed up in it, so prove your loyalty by disarming them.

Kaid. Good idea. I will.

[Exit KAID.]

Sultan. Does the intrigue progress?

Burgess. Yes; but hush! Bring me the weapons, Ratlin.

Enter RATLIN, with weapons.

Bring me the weapons, Kaid.

Enter KAID, with weapons.

And now bring me the prisoners.

Enter ALL.

All. Burgess is going to kill his prisoners.

Burgess. On the contrary, the prisoners are going to kill *you*. The first man who moves, I shoot. T'Ould Squire, arm your men. Sultan, I hold you covered.

All (in tones varying from disgust to affection). Thickhead!

CURTAIN.

HEALTH, WEALTH, AND HAPPINESS

A CHRISTMAS PLAY FOR CHILDREN IN THREE SCENES

By F. C. GRUNDY

THIS is essentially a Christmas play, and with its references to that festive season will prove very suitable for parties. As the action of the play requires but two different sets of scenery, little difficulty need be experienced in placing it upon the stage.

The first and third scenes take place in a nursery, which, like most interiors,



FIG. I

should be fitted up as a box-scene. One of the flats upon the left can be painted with a window—on the right should be a practicable door; whilst the large double flat in the centre must contain a fireplace, in which a fire may be glowing. The flats themselves should be covered with wall-paper suitable for a nursery, and adorned with a number of pictures and cheap-coloured prints such as young people like to have about the room. A large table, several low stools, and the usual nursery appurtenances can be placed about the room in natural positions.

The second scene, which is laid in a wood, can be made with a back-cloth similar to that illustrated in Fig. 1. Large tree-trunks growing close together occupy the whole of the cloth, their interlacing boughs glistening here and there with snow. A little theatrical frost will give the necessary effect of winter. The large space between the two trunks in the immediate foreground must be cut away, and behind the opening, at a distance of about two feet, a small flat, as illustrated in Fig. 2,

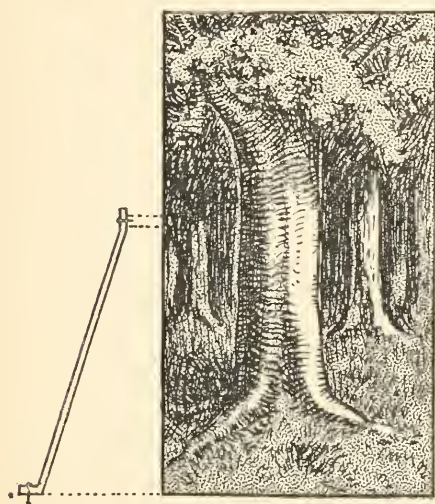


FIG. 2.

On this flat another tree-trunk is painted and suitably illuminated by a lamp placed against the back of the large cloth, so arranged that the light is thrown down upon the flat.

The wings for this scene should represent trees more or less stripped and bare. As the construction of these has already been explained, no further instructions need be given here.

COSTUMES

Dick.—This little ragged boy should be in tattered garments, preferably of some light colour, since ordinary rags present an ineffective appearance upon the stage. He might wear a soiled red waistcoat, tattered blue trousers, and a ragged coat. Being a

cripple, he will of course carry a crutch, and the actor taking his part must practise an appropriate limp, in which the crutch should have full play.

Ronald and Peggy.—The two rich children will need to be dressed simply but well. The boy may wear a velvet Fauntleroy suit with lace collar and cuffs, whilst Peggy can have a yolk dress with a large silk sash.

The Moon Fairy.—An appropriate costume for this character would consist of a dress made of silvery gauze over pale blue sarsanet or other light material. The bodice should be tight-fitting, with a skirt reaching to just below the knee. A cardboard crescent covered with silver paper can be fastened by a silk ribbon around the head, whilst she should carry in her hand a silver wand, also surmounted with a crescent.

Health.—A rose-coloured costume, similar in cut to that of the Moon Fairy, would be suitable for Health. Her skirt and bodice should be trimmed with festoons of artificial roses.

Wealth.—An appropriate dress for this character is depicted in Fig. 3. It consists of a yellow tunic and sleeves, with white shoulder-puffs arranged to appear like money-bags; short white trunks, yellow hose and yellow shoes. Upon the breast are sewn rows of imitation gold coins, such as can be bought in cardboard, whilst similar ornaments are fastened to the sleeves. Upon the shoulder-puffs "£. s. d." may be painted in black letters, this device being repeated upon the front of the breeches. A simple white cap will complete the costume.

Happiness.—The costume for Happiness can be similar in cut to that of Health, but the whole dress must be entirely white.

Plum Pudding.—A little care will be required for making the next few costumes.



FIG. 3

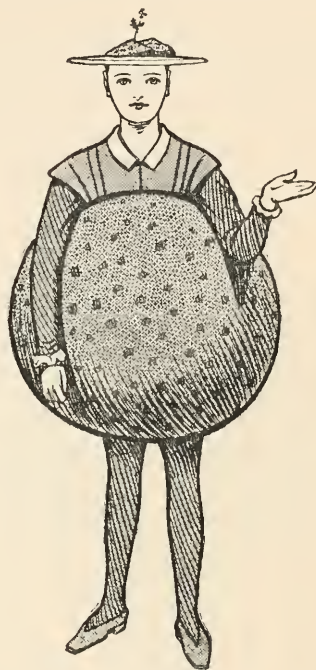


FIG. 4

Plum Pudding, Fig. 4, should be dressed in a brown tunic and hose, with a large white collar and cuffs with frills. Around his body will be a plum pudding made from several rings of cane of varying sizes, as shown in Fig. 5. Over these hoops brown canvas must be stretched, two holes being left at the bottom for the legs, whilst the top must be left entirely open to contain the actor's body. The outside of the canvas should be painted to resemble a plum pudding, with currants and sultanas appearing at irregular intervals over the surface. A couple of straps passing over the shoulders will keep the framework in position. Plum Pudding should wear on his head a large cardboard disc painted white to resemble a plate, in the centre of which a hole is cut to accommodate the head—a chocolate-coloured cloth sprinkled with some white powder to resemble sugar serving to conceal this from the audience.

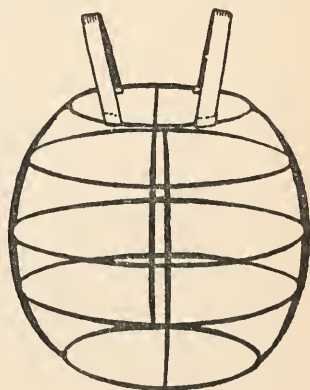


FIG. 5

Mince Pie.—The boy acting this part must wear a costume similar to that of Plum Pudding, only of a lighter colour. To form the pie itself it will be necessary to make two hoops, and stretch between them a strip

of canvas painted with wavy lines to represent the flakes of pastry. Above the upper hoop brown canvas should reach to the body, as shown in Fig. 6, whilst below the whole pie a ring of cardboard covered with silver paper can be made to represent the tin in which mince-pies are baked. As in the case of Plum Pudding, the framework will be supported with straps over the shoulders.

Cracker.—A glance at Fig. 7 will show how this costume can be made. The centre part stretching from the shoulders to the waist can be covered with shiny



FIG. 6



FIG. 7

red paper stretched between two hoops. Below this the cracker should be of gold-coloured material with a ragged edge, whilst over the head similar material must be stretched on a wire framework, allowing a circular opening for the face. On the chest can be placed an imitation wreath of roses, such as one sees on the outside of Christmas crackers.

Holly.—A green short tunic with red trunks and stockings will give the general appearance requisite for the character. On the tunic and sleeves artificial holly may be draped, whilst a crown of real holly can be sewn to a cap and worn on the head.

Mistletoe.—This part, played by a girl, will require a light green dress adorned with a fringe of white balls, the bodice being draped with real mistletoe, a sprig of which is woven into the hair.

HEALTH, WEALTH, AND HAPPINESS

CHARACTERS.

DICK, a *cripple boy*.

RONALD } *Brother and sister.*
PEGGY }

MOON FAIRY.

HEALTH.

WEALTH.

HAPPINESS.

PLUM PUDDING.

MINCE PIE.

CRACKER.

HOLLY.

MISTLETOE.

TWO LITTLE FAIRIES.

SCENE I.—*The Nursery.*

SCENE II.—*A Wood.*

SCENE III.—*The Nursery.*

SCENE I.—*The Nursery.*

MUSIC.

*Curtain rises, and enter HOLLY and
MISTLETOE hand in hand, singing.*

I.

Christmas is coming, and so are we
Ready to add to the jollity.
Wishing you everything bright and gay,
Hoping good fortune may come your way.

II.

Mistletoe (alone, pointing to HOLLY).
Here's Mr. Holly, a lively grig,
Better described as a gay young sprig.
Though his leaves prickle, his heart is
warm;
You may befriend him without a qualm.

III.

Holly (pointing to MISTLETOE).
This is Miss Mistletoe, I declare!
Though she's so green, she is quite all
there!

And if you find there is aught amiss,
She will soon put it right, like this!—like
this!

[*Kisses her twice.*]

IV.

Mistletoe (waving towards HOLLY).
Hey! for the holly so gleaming and red,
Holly (waving MISTLETOE).
Hey! for the mistletoe over your head.

Both.

Christmas is coming, and so are we
Ready to add to your jollity!

Holly. I mustn't spend much time
over the decorations for Ronald and
Peggy. I have so many houses to
do before to-morrow.

Mistletoe. So have I! *Every one*
wants a bunch of mistletoe for
Christmas.

[*While speaking they hang up
holly and mistletoe.*]

(*Both turn, saying.*) Who's this?

*Enter WEALTH pompously, to middle
of stage.*

Wealth. My name is Wealth. My
power untold,
For I am made of glittering gold.
And as I go upon my way,
With money-bags (*swings them*) the
world I sway.

Enter HEALTH, bounding in.

Health. My name you may
already know,
For I am sought where'er I go;
And what avail is endless wealth
Without the priceless gift of health?
[*Bows, pointing to himself.*]

Holly (to MISTLETOE). These two
seem to think a good deal of them-
selves; I'm going to speak to them.
Hullo!

Wealth. Who are you?

[*Drawing himself up.*]

Holly. We're Holly and Mistletoe,

and greatly in request just now, I can tell you.

Wealth. We're *always* in request. (*Grandly.*) You may not be aware that when Ronald and Peggy were born their godmother chose *us*—(*points to HEALTH, then self*)—out of all the fairies to take charge of them. Since then they have wanted for nothing. I supply them with money, and Health sees that they are never ill.

Holly. And *we* supply them with decorations every Christmas.

Wealth. Pooh! what's that? *Any* one can do without you, but we are wanted somewhere every minute.

Mistletoe (tossing head). I think we had better be going, Holly. Anyway, *we* haven't time to make rude remarks.

Holly. I think so too. I'm beginning to feel quite prickly.

[*Exeunt HOLLY and MISTLETOE.*]

Wealth. If I were Father Christmas, I would send round better specimens than *those* with holly and mistletoe! Well, there is Ronald's present—there is Peggy's present. (*Puts two bags on table.*) Now, Health, is everything right?

Health (looking round). Yes, quite! airy rooms, open windows—everything as it should be.

Wealth. Then we must go. There is a grand banquet to-night, and I must be represented.

Health. That's not in my line at all; it only does *me* harm.

[*Exeunt HEALTH and WEALTH.*]

Music, while RONALD and PEGGY enter looking very bored, yawning.

Ronald (going to table). I suppose

these are our Christmas presents, Peggy.

Peggy (taking one up). I know what it is—stupid old money. There's nothing I want, so what's the good of it?

Ronald. I *told* mother and father not to give me any more money. It's no surprise at all. Oh, it is a *stupid* present!

Peggy. How much have you got?

Ronald (counting it). Ten pounds, and there's ten more upstairs that I don't know *what* to do with.

Peggy (gloomily). I've got the same. O Ronald, why can't we *enjoy* Christmas? Other children do.

Ronald (also gloomily). Other children get all the fun.

Peggy. I wish I were Frank. *He* has *lovely* Christmases. Last year he had chicken-pox, and his mother gave him jelly *every* day.

Ronald (impatiently). Mother lets us have jelly whenever we want, silly, without chicken-pox.

Peggy (stamping foot). Anyway, Frank said the chicken-pox was very nice, and I think you're *very* unkind, Ronald, to call me silly.

[*Begins to cry.*]

Ronald (going up to her). Don't cry, Peggy. I'm sorry, but it *is* so dull having *everything* you want.

Peggy (wistfully). If only we could want something and didn't know it was coming, it would be *so* exciting.

[*Music begins.*]

Ronald. O Peggy, hark! What's that?

[*Both CHILDREN go to window and listen while song is sung.*]

I.

Oh ! who is that flitting about in the wood
 With footsteps so light and so airy ?
 And who is that chasing the snow as it falls ?
 'Tis only a little White Fairy.

[*Little WHITE FAIRY flits through.*]

II.

And who is that peeping among the tree-tops,
 And hiding in bunny-holes, wary,
 And throwing up cones for the squirrels
 to catch ?
 'Tis only a little Brown Fairy.

[*Little BROWN FAIRY flits through,
 throwing up fir-cones.*]

III.

Oh ! won't you come with us, it's lovely
 out there,
 And all the wood people will greet you.
 The Moon Fairy's lighted up lamps on
 your path,
 And now she is coming to meet you.

[*As song ends, stage is darkened
 and the MOON FAIRY appears.
 Music continues until she
 speaks.*]

Moon Fairy. Children !

Ronald. Who is it ?

Moon Fairy. Don't be frightened,
 children. I am the Moon Fairy,
 and as it is Christmas Eve I have
 come to ask you if you would like
 to go to the fairy wood.

Ronald and Peggy. Oh yes, we
 should !

Moon Fairy. I thought it would be
 a treat for you, and I wanted you
 to have a very happy Christmas.

Peggy (clasping hands). O Moon
 Fairy, Ronald and I don't know
 how it is, but we're not happy and
 we don't enjoy ourselves a bit.

Moon Fairy. Not happy ! Not

enjoy yourselves — with *all* your
 blessings !

Ronald. That's what Mother says,
 but Peggy and I would rather do
 without so many blessings and have
 more fun !

Moon Fairy. Well ! I must see if I
 can help you. And now, come along,
 and you will see some one who is
quite happy. You can come as you
 are ; you won't feel the cold, and I
 will show you the way. [*Exeunt ALL.*]

SCENE II.—A Wood.

*Music while DICK enters on
 crutches, limps across stage to
 L. and throws himself down
 under a tree.*

Dick. Now this is what I call
 right down jolly—enough snow to
 make thousands of snowballs (*makes
 one and throws it*), and yet, because
 it's Christmas Eve, and because this
 is a fairy wood, everything's as
 warm and snug as possible. I wish
 I could have a rattling big Christ-
 mas dinner—wouldn't I tuck into
 the plum puddings and mince-pies ;
 but never mind, Mother says it's
 wonderful how many things you
 can do without when you try ; and
 when I'm grown up—(*Moon shines
 and music begins.*) Oh ! there's the
 moon ! Perhaps if I wish very
 hard I might see that beautiful
 Fairy again. What lovely music
 the trees make ! (*Reclines on arms.*)
 It makes me feel—so—sleepy.

[*Sleeps. Two little FAIRIES,
 brown and white, come and
 look at DICK, holding fairy
 lamps.*]

Whistling duet, during which WEALTH and HEALTH come in turns, they look at DICK and turn away. Then HAPPINESS enters, bends over DICK, kisses him and strokes his hair; goes off slowly as music dies away. A light comes as HAPPINESS bends over DICK. As music dies away, enter RONALD and PEGGY, RONALD leading PEGGY by the hand.

Peggy (fretfully). I'm tired, Ronald; I don't want to go any farther.

Ronald. Come on, Peggy. Look! there's a boy under the tree asleep. Perhaps he will know where the fairies are. (*Goes up to DICK and shakes him.*) Hie! wake up!

[*DICK sits up and rubs his eyes.*

Dick (drowsily). I thought I was dreaming. (*Sees RONALD and PEGGY.*) Hullo! Who are you?

Ronald. We're Ronald and Peggy. The Moon Fairy brought us into the wood, and she *said* we were going to have a lovely time, but now she's left us, and we don't know what to do.

Peggy (in an aggrieved tone). I thought we were going to see fairies and all sorts of things.

Dick. We're sure to see something if you wait, *because* this is a fairy wood. Both of you come and sit down by me—(*pats ground*)—and then we can talk. It's awfully nice here.

[*The children, RONALD and PEGGY, look at one another;*

then nod and sit down, one on each side of DICK.

Ronald. What's your name?

Dick. Dick's my name.

Ronald. Why! here's a crutch. (*Holds it up.*) Are you lame?

Dick. As lame as a tree!

Peggy (looks at him). And are you—poor?

Dick. As poor as a rat.

Peggy. And all ragged!

Dick. A collection of rags and tatters.

Peggy. Then *you* can't be happy?

Dick. As happy as a king!

Ronald. But you can't run about!

Dick. No! but I can hop; look here! (*Gets up and hops round on crutches.*) There!

[*RONALD and PEGGY clap hands.*

Ronald. I say, you're a rare "plucked 'un!"

Dick. What's that?

Ronald. Father says it's being game.

Dick. What do you mean?

Ronald. Don't you know what being game is? It means that when you have a rattling bad time you just grin *hard* and bear it; and if you're playing a game and lose, you don't say it's all the other chap's fault and not fair, you jolly well go *it* all the harder.

Peggy (eagerly). That's what Ronald does. When Frank knocked him down and sat on him, Ronald didn't say *anything*, but he gave Frank *such* a black eye!

Dick. I say! What happened then?

Ronald. Nothing. We just had tea.

Peggy. Frank ate the most. He

had nearly half Ronald's birthday cake, and *then* five tarts.

Dick. And a black eye! Jolly good I call it!

Peggy (getting up). O Ronald, let's have an entertainment here and all do something!

Ronald. All right, I don't care. Ladies first, so you can begin.

Peggy. I only know a recitation. Will that do? It's called "The Darling Little Girl."

Ronald. The name sounds fairly soft.

Peggy (pretends to beat RONALD). Dick, I'll ask you a riddle. Why is Ronald like cake?

Dick. I'm sure I don't know.

Peggy (triumphantly). Because a good beating makes him better!

Ronald. Oh shut up! Fire away!

Peggy. "The Darling Little Girl."

I.

My Nanna says she used to know

A darling little girl,

Who always did as she was bid,

And curlt her hair in curl.

II.

She never ate too much for tea,

Nor asked for cake and buns;

She kept her eyes cast down like this,

And twiddled round her thumbs.

III.

She never spoke a saucy word

Nor put on any airs,

And when it came to bedtime, why,

She simply *ran* upstairs.

IV.

She scrubbed her face until it shone,

Her frocks were always neat;

She kept her hands in cotton gloves,

And turned out both her feet.

V.

When ill in bed, she only said,

"Dear Nanna, may I soon

Take that *delicious* medicine in

A nice large table-spoon?"

VI.

And Nanna says she doesn't hope,

That in these *dreadful* days

She'll come across a child *again*

With such delightful ways.

VII.

Of course one should be very good;

But really as things go,

I'm half inclined to think myself

It *might* be rather slow.

VIII.

And Daddy says, *he* doesn't want

That darling little girl.

He'd rather have me as I am,

Without my hair in curl!

[Boys *clap*, and say "*Encore!*"

Peggy. I shall only bow. I heard Nurse say the other morning that it never does to make yourself too cheap!

Ronald. Well, *we* don't mind. Now, Dick, go ahead!

Dick. No, please, you first.

Ronald (gets up). All right; "I and Tommy Atkins."

Peggy (quickly). That's wrong; it ought to be "Tommy Atkins and I."

Ronald. No, it oughtn't. It's "I and Tommy Atkins." Girls never understand *anything* about soldiers!

Peggy. 'Tisn't soldiers, it's grammar!

Dick. Oh, never mind! I want to hear it awfully—do begin!

Ronald (nodding defiantly at PEGGY). "I and Tommy Atkins."

I.

When I am grown up, I'll be
The finest soldier you can see ;
And won't the things begin to hum,
When I and Tommy Atkins come !
[*Marches up and down during last
line of each verse.*

II.

For I shall be an officer,
Just like the great Lord Kitchener,
And oh ! the foe, *how* he will run,
When I and Tommy Atkins come !

III.

Whatever clime, whatever sky,
Our flag shall wave when we are nigh,
And blow the trumpets, beat the drum,
When I and Tommy Atkins come !

IV.

(*Slower.*) But mother says I ne'er shall
win
Unless I keep my temper in.
I *lose* it, but it will not go ;
And that is very hard you know.

V.

But English boys should never mind
A good stiff fight of any kind,
And *all* my battles *shall* be won
When I and Tommy Atkins come !

[PEGGY and DICK *clap*.

Dick. I say, it sounds as if you're going to be no end of a chap when you grow up.

PEGGY (*eagerly*). I should think he is ! Ronald's going to be a *great* hero when he's big, and he's got pictures of them all over his bedroom, beginning at Alfred the Great.

Dick (*admiringly*). My word !

Ronald (*who has been trying to stop* PEGGY). Girls talk such awful rubbish. Now then, Dick !

Dick (*rather sadly*). What can I do ? I can't sing or recite, or anything.

Peggy. Tell us what you do at home. Where do you live ?

Dick. In a *very* little house. Mother and father, and Polly and Willie and Sandy and I all live there. It's fine when father has work ; but sometimes he hasn't any, and then we have to pretend we're not hungry, and that isn't quite so much fun.

Peggy. Fancy ! not enough to eat ! Oh ! *poor* Dick !

Dick. Oh, you get used to it. We have splendid games pretending we're rich, and we each say what we'd like for dinner.

Ronald. We shouldn't care for that, because we can have just what we like every day for dinner.

Peggy. Tell us what you choose ?

Dick. Polly chooses tarts with cream on the top, 'cos they look so pretty in the shop windows ; and I choose plum pudding 'cos it's filling ; and Willie chooses roast-beef, same as father ; and Sandy chooses lobster, though he's never tasted one !

Ronald (*impatiently*). That's enough about dinner. What do you do ?

Dick. I clean boots and knives for Mrs. Brown. She asked me to go, even though I'm lame, 'cos she said I look happy and she likes to see happy people.

Peggy. What *makes* you happy, when you're poor and lame and ragged ?

Ronald. And what makes us *un-*

happy, when we're rich and well and have everything we want?

Dick. I don't know. Is it a riddle?

Ronald. No, it's not a riddle, but it's a puzzle! [*Music begins.*]

Ronald. What's that noise? Some one's coming!

[*Voices heard saying: "This is the way!"—"No, it isn't!"—"I tell you it is!"*]

Enter, to music, PLUM PUDDING, MINCE PIE, and CRACKER.

Plum Pudding (bowing). Good evening, young people! We're on our way to a Christmas party, and Mince Pie insists upon going the wrong way.

Mince Pie. It's the right way; only you're so fat and heavy you can't get along!

Plum Pudding. I'd rather be heavy than crusty like you!

Mince Pie. Crusty indeed! You're jealous. When I was put into the oven I rose—(*raising hands*)—to the occasion, and the result is—puff!

Plum Pudding. Anyway, they soon made mincemeat of you!

Mince Pie. That's better than to be tied down in a vulgar basin with unbleached calico—ugh!

Plum Pudding. You're not made from a good old family recipe seventy years old. [*Pats himself.*]

Mince Pie. I should hope not! I'm the modern style, light and airy. People don't have indigestion who eat me! And the proof of the pudding's in the eating!

Plum Pudding. You impertinent Pie!

Mince Pie. You preposterous Pudding!

Plum Pudding. I'll fight you—come on. [*They fight.*]

Peggy and Cracker (rushing to them). Oh please, don't! Do stop!

Plum Pudding. Mince Pie, we're old friends—make it up!

[*Offers hand.*]

Mince Pie. Sorry! right you are; —(*aside*)—but I nearly had a slice out of him.

Cracker (to PEGGY). Ask them to sing their duet, that always makes them feel friendly.

Peggy (to PLUM PUDDING and MINCE PIE). Oh, please, will you sing your duet, we do want to hear it.

Plum Pudding (digging MINCE PIE in ribs). What do you say?

Mince Pie (doing the same). Lead off, old buster!

Plum Pudding. Come on, then!

[*They sing.*]

"THE CHRISTMAS CHEER"

I.

Said the cook one day, "I must work away,

For I'm late I greatly fear.

There's the pies to bake and the puddings to make,

And Christmas is so near."

So she stoned the plums with her fingers and thumbs,

And she minced the suet fine;

Then the peel she shred, and she grated bread,

And she mixed in egg and wine.

Chorus.

Oh! oh! the Christmas cheer, the Christmas cheer,

'Twill cost you dear; oh! oh! 'twill cost you dear.

If you eat *him* (*each points at other*)
 you'll *soon* be ill,
 And have the doctor and a pill.

II.

"And now," said cook, as her dough
 she took,

"I must make some good mince-pies,
 'Twill be right enough if my pastry's puff,
 And I see it gaily rise."

So she turned about and she rolled it out,
 And she shaped it with her hands,
 And it soon was done all quite *Ar*,
 In the little patty pans.

Chorus.

III.

Then the flames did soar with a cheerful
 roar,

Up the kitchen chimney wide.
 And the stove grew hot while the bub-
 bling pot

Held the pudding safe inside.
 Then the mince-pies rose on their little
 toes,

So crisp and light were they,
 And they said, "We must soon go on
 the bust,
 And be eaten on Christmas Day!"

Chorus.

[*CHILDREN clap.*

Peggy. Oh, thank you, that was
 lovely!

Plum Pudding. We must be off
 now, Mince Pie, or we shall never
 get eaten to-night.

Mince Pie. Come along, Cracker.
 You want pulling to set you off!
 Good-bye, children; see you again
 soon!

Children. Good-bye—good-bye!

[*Exeunt PLUM PUDDING,
 MINCE PIE, and CRACKER.*

Dick. They're *just* the sort you
 want at Christmas time!

Ronald. Rather! but we must go
 now, *Peggy*. Mother will be won-
 dering where we are. Aren't you
 coming, *Dick*?

Dick (*picking up crutches*). Yes!
 I'm coming.

[*RONALD and PEGGY run off.*

*DICK gets up slowly and
 rather painfully, rubs his
 hand over his eyes, and is
 about to move when RONALD
 and PEGGY return.*

Peggy. O *Dick*, we didn't *mean*
 to go so fast.

Dick (*going as fast as he can on
 his crutches*). Go ahead! go ahead!
 I'm on for being game!

SCENE III.—*Nursery. (A year later.)*

*Enter HAPPINESS, singing and
 dancing.*

I.

The stream came singing o'er the rocks
 And dancing down the hill;
 And when a river it became,
 Why, it was happier still.

II.

The baby birds within their nests
 So merrily did trill;
 And when upon the wing they flew,
 Why, they were happier still.

III.

The little seeds came smiling up,
 And flourished with a will;
 And when into big plants they grew,
 Why, they were happier still.

IV.

Oh happy world! Oh lovely world!
 Thy beauty makes me thrill!
 How happy I 'tis mine to try
 To make you happier still.

[*Exit HAPPINESS.*

Enter, to music, MOON FAIRY; she waves wand. Enter HEALTH and WEALTH.

Moon Fairy. I have a message for you from Ronald and Peggy's fairy godmother. (*HEALTH and WEALTH bow.*) All this year, by my wish, the children have been in your sister's charge instead of yours, as you know. Their godmother now wishes Happiness to be always with them instead of you, as she suits them so well.

Health and Wealth. That insignificant little thing!

Moon Fairy. It is true she is often very quiet and unnoticed, but people can never get on well without her.

Wealth (drawing himself up). And how about *me*?

Moon Fairy. Well, somehow we often find out that you're not of much use, by yourself! And even with Health, you're not *always* a success.

Wealth (shrugging shoulders). I must be off! Moonstruck people are beyond *my* comprehension! Come, Health! [*They turn to go.*]

Re-enter HAPPINESS, to music. She goes up to HEALTH and WEALTH, clasping her hands.

Happiness. Oh, Health and Wealth, please help me! I've just come from a round of all the hospitals—both of you are wanted there so badly. We three together—(*puts out her hands*)—*think* what we can do! and it's Christmas time!

Health (slowly). Well, I'll come!

Wealth (chinking bags). I may as well come too.

[*HAPPINESS goes off, taking a hand of each. Music.*]

Moon Fairy. I think I must let the children have a little fun here, this Christmas. [*Exit MOON FAIRY.*]

Enter RONALD and PEGGY, dancing in.

Ronald. This is something like Christmas, Peggy.

Peggy. There are such *heaps* of things I want! I keep wondering if they're coming or not. It's so exciting!

Ronald. You mustn't mind if they don't all come, as father has lost so much money.

Peggy. I shan't! but yesterday he said it was almost worth losing it, because you were so good.

Ronald. So were you; you never cried when doctor came to set your arm.

Peggy. I wanted to be game, like Dick, and doctor gave me *half-a-crown* for not crying.

Ronald. Isn't it queer! Father's lost a lot of money, and I've had measles, and you've broken your arm, and mother couldn't take us to the sea, and yet we've never been so happy before!

Peggy. I know why! We can have treats now!

Ronald. I expect that's why Dick's so happy—nearly everything's a treat to him!

Peggy. Yes, and Dick says when he's grown up he's going to give every single person treats who hasn't

had any, because he knows how lovely they are!

Ronald. What's that!

Lively music heard, during which enter PLUM PUDDING, MINCE PIE, and CRACKER, drawing cart with DICK dressed up in sheets of brown paper, with paper cap, bells, &c., as MR. NONSENSE, surrounded by brown-paper parcels.

Plum Pudding. Good evening! We've just looked in to wish you a happy Christmas, and to bring you a visitor. May I introduce Mr. Nonsense!

Plum Pudding (continuing). He's a first-rate fellow, and he'll sing you a song if you ask him; but first may I offer you a slice of myself. I'm made in the good old substantial style this year, and I can offer you either a dream slice or a nightmare slice!

Peggy. What's the difference?

Plum Pudding (offering two slices). This small one will give you a dream, this large one will give you a nightmare—that's like a dream, only a sort of superior edition.

Mince Pie. Let me advise you not to take either. He'll only make you uncomfortable. He never agrees with people, and they only make him look foolish.

Plum Pudding (angrily). Only because they like me *too* well.

[*Glares at MINCE PIE.*

Mince Pie (teasingly). Keep calm! You won't need any brandy to set you on fire.

Cracker. Oh, don't squabble; let's ask Mr. Nonsense to sing a song!

Ronald and Peggy. Oh yes, please do, Mr. Nonsense!

Mr. Nonsense. Always willing to oblige! but my song's very *classical*; it's all about the Nursery Rhymes!

Ronald and Peggy. We should love that!

Mr. Nonsense. Well, I'll do my best.

[*Coughs, and waves stick in hand, making PLUM PUDDING and MINCE PIE jump.*

I.

I am just the Nonsense Man.
I'm going to tell you all I can
About the folks I met to-day,
When I was coming on my way.

II.

There was first the Old Woman who
lived in a Shoe;
She was hunting the village for Little
Boy Blue;
But I told her he'd gone off to Banbury
Cross,
To teach Humpty-Dumpty to ride a
Cock Horse.

III.

Then next Tommy Tucker came wander-
ing by;
He said Georgie Porgie had made the
girls cry.
But Red Riding Hood's wolf ate up
Georgie for tea,
Just before the three bears hurried by
for a spree.

IV.

And then came Jack Horner, his pie on
his arm;
He told me the plums hadn't done him
much harm;

But twenty-four blackbirds had sat in the dish,
And sung a loud song, though it wasn't his wish.

v.

Poor dear Cinderella was crying alone,
Till noble Dick Whittington took her off home.

And as she had only one slipper to wear,
He asked Goody Two Shoes to lend her a pair.

vi.

And then to amuse her he showed her his clock,

With the mouse right inside that says
Dickory Dock.

And when they had seen it, up hurried Bo-peep;
She couldn't discover her Baa-ing Black Sheep.

vii.

I went down a lane and I very soon saw
The Baa-ing Black Sheep close to Margery Daw;

She said Simple Simon and Shock-headed Peter

Could not come themselves, but had sent it to meet her.

viii.

I asked her to come for a saunter with me;
We swung Baby Bunting upon a high tree.
When hungry, we asked Mother Hubbard for bread;

She gave us a bone from the cupboard instead.

ix.

I helped Mary Mary her flowers to grow;
She was *so* contrary, we quarrelled, and so
I begged Master Jack and his Beanstalk to come;

But when he saw Mary, he went at a run.

x.

So on I went steadily up a steep hill,
And just at the summit I met Jack and Jill.

King Cole was there too. He had come from the town
With wonderful plaster to put on Jack's crown.

xi.

He told us a secret. He said he had found
Who killed poor Cock Robin who lay on a mound.

It was the Mad Hatter, *he'd* told a big cram,
But Mary had spied him when out with her lamb.

xii.

The lamb wouldn't speak, he was sulky and cross,

Because the Mad Hatter had murmured
"Mint Sauce."

But Alice in Wonderland came with a bump,
And gave all the party a very hard thump.

xiii.

Miss Muffet was angry and said with amaze
That Alice was aping the Suffragettes' ways.

The Spider agreed that it wasn't quite nice;
He thought little girls were all sugar and spice.

xiv.

And now I must cease, for my narrative ends,

And we must take leave of our cherished old friends.

Old-fashioned they are, but they'll live on for aye;

We love them so dearly, we can't let them die.

[The others all clap their hands.]

Mr. Nonsense. Now, aren't you going to undo me—and then the presents!

Ronald. Undo you!

Mr. Nonsense. Yes, I undo, though you mightn't think it.

Plum Pudding. I'll help you ; I know how he works !

[*All set to work taking off paper, &c.—at last DICK comes to view ; joyful cries from RONALD and PEGGY of, "It's Dick ! it's Dick !"*]

Dick (getting out of cart). It was the Moon Fairy's idea—just for a joke, and now undo your presents.

[*Several toys are undone with exclamations of delight from RONALD and PEGGY. MINCE PIE, PLUM PUDDING, and CRACKER look on and admire.*]

Music. Re-enter HAPPINESS.

Peggy (lifting hands). Oh ! who is it ?

Dick (going forward and calling out excitedly). It's my Fairy ! The lovely Fairy who comes to me in my dreams !

Happiness (putting hand on DICK's shoulder). You know me well, little Dick, and Ronald and Peggy are getting to know me too. See ! (*Holds out strips of paper with wishes written on them.*) I have come just for a minute to bring you each a wish for a Christmas present !

Ronald, Peggy, and Dick (in turns). Oh, thank you !

Peggy (eagerly). I know what I wish—always to be as happy as I am now !

Ronald. Oh yes ! I wish that too !

Dick. And I wish all the people here—(*putting out hands towards audience*)—to be as happy as I am—always.

Plum Pudding (rushing forward). And now, if we're all so jolly happy, let's have a dance ! Dick shall be in the middle, and we'll all dance round him.

[*The others hoist DICK on table ; then all take hands and dance round, singing. HAPPINESS looks on smiling at one end, and MOON FAIRY at other.*]

I.

Oh don't believe fairies live only in books,
To think so would only be wrong.
They're with us all day, at our work and
our play,
And now they are hearing our song.

II.

If you will believe in them, then they
will come ;
We've all found it out to be true.
And when you're oppressed, with dull
care as your guest,
Just think what the fairies can do !

III.

They'll brighten your pathway with
beautiful thoughts,
And smooth it with many a jest.
With pluck and with fun you can get a
lot done,
And Happiness (*points to HAPPINESS*)
soon does the rest.

IV.

We're as happy as kings and as lively
as larks,
And yet we all feel we must sigh.
[*Sigh here.*]
You've all been so kind that we very
much mind,
Because we must bid you good-bye !

[*Wave hands.*]

CURTAIN.

THE PARADISE OF CHILDREN

By GLADYS E. WARREN

THE scene for "The Paradise of Children" takes place in a Greek cottage of the simplest description.

The interior of the cottage should consist of flats arranged according to the plan shown in Fig. 1. The outer flats must be bare and white, although a good effect can be gained by painting great beams across. The back must be very similar in design to the wings, although festoons of flowers hung from the top and around the window may be painted in with a very pleasing effect. A practicable window, Fig. 2, should be made on the left flat.

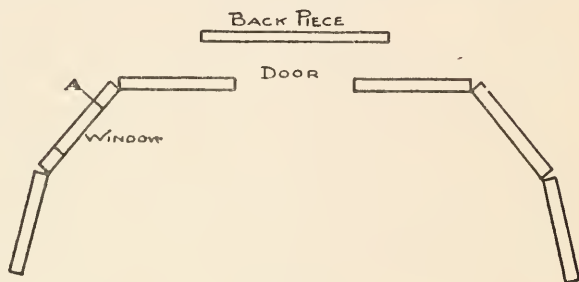


FIG. 1

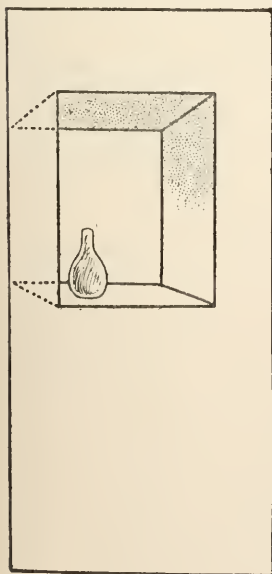


FIG. 2

Window-panes were of course unknown in the days of Epimetheus, so the space should be occupied by leaves and flowers painted on a cheap paper blind hung about two feet from the opening, and illumined by means of a lamp hung to the back of the flat. Cardboard ledges arranged as in the diagram and painted a stone colour will give the appearance of the window piercing through a solid wall, and this effect can be heightened by placing a small vase on the lower ledge. Real leaves and flowers—especially the former—can always be easily procured, so that, if desired, they can be substituted for the imitation foliage described above.

The furniture of the stage must be very simple. Two plain wooden stools—one by the window, and the other near the entrance—will be sufficient, although a small trestle table may be placed in the centre of the stage.

The large box or chest from which Hope emerges in the second scene must be large enough to allow a small child to hide within it quite comfortably. The lid, which must, of course, be closed, should be pierced with a number of holes to allow the occupant plenty of fresh air.

Another arrangement for the chest is a three-sided box, similar to that shown in Fig. 3, which can be easily knocked together from a

large orange-box, the sides being painted black or a dull brown. A chest of this description must naturally be placed against the back of the stage, in such a manner that the absence of the fourth side is not noticeable to the audience.

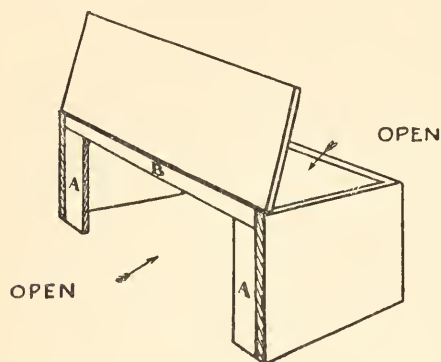


FIG. 3

could be made from a strong leather boot sock, in the tip of which is a loop for the great toe to pass through, whilst two straps fastened to the heel are passed round the ankle, thus serving to keep the sandal in position.

Epimetheus should wear a garland of flowers round his head, but failing this a simple band or fillet will serve the purpose equally well.

Pandora.—The dress of Pandora is very similar to the foregoing; the dress should, however, be fuller, bagging over the girdle loosely, and falling below in larger folds, with a long blue scarf or shawl draped over the head and falling down across the shoulders as far as the waist. The hair must be let down and bound round the temples with a garland or plain fillet. The legs should be bare, or encased in white stockings.

Hope.—It is necessary for this part to be played by a little girl, whose costume, similar in cut to that of Pandora, should be in the emblematic colour of green. This must be of a light tint, as dark greens appear very sombre in the footlights. The hair should be free and flow over the shoulders, whilst the legs and feet may be bare or sandalled. Small wings constructed of wire and muslin should be sewn to the back, and must reach well above the shoulders.

The Three Evils.—Bad Temper, Hate, and Spite should be dressed like Hope, the costumes being red, with black wings, black stockings, and red shoes. In their hands they must carry pointed red rods with which to prod the children.

The Chorus of Cares, Diseases, &c., can be similarly attired in grey dresses with black wings, and carrying black rods.

COSTUMES

Epimetheus.—The Greek boy's dress in which Epimetheus must be attired is very simple in pattern. A white tunic reaching to the knees, and bound above the waist with a plain girdle, Fig. 4, will present the correct classic cut. The arms must be bare from the shoulders, and the legs bare below the knees, whilst the feet may either be bare or encased in plain sandals. These latter



FIG. 4

THE PARADISE OF CHILDREN

CHARACTERS.

EPIMETHEUS.

PANDORA.

HOPE.

BAD TEMPER.

HATE.

SPITE.

*Chorus of Cares, Diseases, and other
Troubles.*

SCENE I.—EPIMETHEUS *discovered,
standing near window.*

Epimetheus. Soon Pandora will have arrived. How glad I am to have a little playfellow coming to live with me! I wonder how she will like the Paradise of Children. (*Comes forward.*) It is a glorious land! All day we dance and sing and romp, and eat fruit and cakes and sweets. (*Knock at the door.*) That must be Pandora. Come in!
[*Goes to door.*]

Enter PANDORA.

Pandora. How do you do, cousin Epimetheus!

Epimetheus (kissing her). How do you do, Pandora! Welcome to the Children's Paradise!

[*Gives her chair by window.*]

Pandora. What a lovely name! And it seems a lovely land. Lots and lots of merry children brought me to your door, and they all wore wreaths of beautiful flowers on their heads, and they sang and danced the whole time. They seemed very, very happy.

Epimetheus. All the children are happy here.

Pandora. Always?

Epimetheus. Of course.

Pandora. And are the grown-ups happy too?

Epimetheus. Grown-ups! What do you mean? The children do not grow up.

Pandora. But you must have fathers and mothers here.

Epimetheus. Oh no! They have gone over the high mountains to the Far-Away Land.

Pandora. It must be fun here. I am sure I shall be very happy.

Epimetheus. Of course you will. And I hope you will like your new home. Do you think this room pretty?

Pandora (jumping up). It is lovely! (*Walks round slowly, examining room.*) What pretty flowers! And what glorious fruit, and—(*knocking her knee against box*)—oh, what a horrid old box! What is in it?

Epimetheus. I do not know.

Pandora. You do not know! (*Laughing.*) What a funny boy you are! Who gave you the box?

Epimetheus. That is a secret.

Pandora. Oh, I love secrets! Do tell me this one!

Epimetheus. I cannot. I promised not to tell any one how it came.

Pandora (running across to him). Oh, but I am your great friend; it won't matter telling me.

Epimetheus. No, I cannot tell even you.

Pandora (holding his sleeve). Oh, please do!

Epimetheus (turning away). No.

Pandora. Oh do, Epimetheus! I will promise not to tell any one else. (*EPIMETHEUS shakes his head.*) I shall go away again if you will not trust me with your secret.

Epimetheus. I must not tell you, although I should like to do so.

Pandora (looking up, coaxingly). I will give you a lovely kiss if you will tell me all about that box.

Epimetheus (suddenly yielding). Kiss me, Pandora. (*PANDORA kisses him.*) I will tell you; it cannot do any harm. Listen, then.

[*PANDORA sits down, close to him.*]

Pandora. I am listening!

Epimetheus. The box was left here this morning by a strange youth with a wonderful cap which seemed to have two wings on it, and a queer cloak, and ringed sandals!

Pandora (breathlessly). And a staff?

Epimetheus. Yes. A staff with two serpents carved round it; so well carved that they looked alive. He said that he had brought the box for me to take care of, but he did not tell me his name.

Pandora (jumping up). I know who he was. He was Quicksilver, and it was he who brought me to this land, so no doubt he brought the box for me. (*Clapping her hands.*) Perhaps it is full of pretty dresses, and toys, and sweets. (*Rushing towards box.*) Do let us open it at once!

Epimetheus (crossing, and pulling her back). No, no! You must not open it. Quicksilver did not say it was for you; he only asked me to keep the box till he could come back for it.

Pandora. Well—let me peep inside.

Epimetheus. Oh no! We have no right even to lift the lid before he returns.

Pandora (returning slowly to box). But I want to see inside.

Epimetheus (following her, and taking her hand). You must not! Leave the box alone, and let us have a game.

Pandora (pettishly). There won't be room to play with this great ugly box in the way. (*Kicking it.*) I wish the horrid thing was not here at all if I am not to be allowed to open it.

Epimetheus. O Pandora—don't kick it. You might hurt the box.

Pandora (viciously). I should like to hurt it; it spoils all my pleasure. (*Coaxingly.*) Do let us open it! We can shut it up again afterwards.

Epimetheus. No, Pandora, it would not be right. (*Leading her towards door.*) Come out with me and look for figs; they are beautifully ripe now.

Pandora (dropping his hand, crossly). I don't want figs. I want to see what is in that box.

Epimetheus. Forget the box, and come and have a merry romp in the gardens.

Pandora. I cannot be merry. I shall be unhappy till I have peeped into your wonderful box.

Epimetheus. Unhappy? What is unhappiness? Every one is happy here.

Pandora. Oh, bother every one! Am not I somebody? And I am not happy because you will not let me open—

[*EPIMETHEUS puts his hand over her mouth.*]

Epimetheus. Hush, Pandora! Do not talk about it any more. (*Voices outside, singing. EPIMETHEUS rushes to window.*) Hark! all the children are singing and dancing. Do let us go and play with them! (*Voices heard calling EPIMETHEUS and PANDORA.*) They are calling us. (*PANDORA crosses slowly towards window.*) They want to know you. Come (*goes towards door*), Pandora.

Pandora (hanging back). I would rather know what is in the box.

Epimetheus (coaxingly). But I want to go and play. Won't you come, Pandora. I am longing to dance and sing with the children.

Pandora (standing by box). Very well, if you want to go to those children you can. I would far rather stay here. (*Sitting down on floor, leaning against box.*) I am tired. And I do not want to play silly games with a boy who will not let me do what I wish.

Epimetheus (returning to her; courteously). But I cannot leave you alone, Pandora.

Pandora (rudely). I would rather be alone. Please go.

Epimetheus. Very well, I will.

[*Runs away sharply. Exit.*]

PANDORA rises, listens at

door, then at window; looks all round, and finally tiptoes back to box and kneels down beside it.

Pandora. Now I can open the box. Why should I not? It cannot do any harm. Epimetheus is a silly, dull boy. (*Tries to untie cord which is round box, and very firmly knotted apparently.*) I can shut it up again before he comes back, and he will never know I even lifted the lid. (*Stage darkens.*) How dark it is getting! I feel quite frightened! Oh dear! What is that? I thought I heard something move inside the box. I simply must peep inside. It is nearly undone! What would Epimetheus say! He must never know.

[*EPIMETHEUS appears at back, carrying fruit, unseen by PANDORA. PANDORA finally unties knot and starts lifting lid. EPIMETHEUS steps forward, too late to stop her.*]

CURTAIN. SHORT INTERVAL.

SCENE II. — *Scene as before, but the stage darkened. Crowd of TROUBLES dancing about, and chasing EPIMETHEUS and PANDORA, who scream wildly.*

Epimetheus. Pandora—Pandora—what have you done?

Pandora. O Epimetheus, I am so frightened!

Epimetheus. Oh—oh! I am stung!

Pandora (screaming). So am I!

Epimetheus. Why did you open the box?

Pandora. I did not know all these dreadful creatures would fly out.

Epimetheus. How they sting!

Pandora (crying). I am hurt all over—and I am so unhappy.

Epimetheus. And so am I. I wish I were dead.

Pandora. I feel as though I should never be happy again. Oh, you horrid things, what can you be?

Troubles (laughing like demons). We are the Troubles!

Pandora. Troubles! Oh, how dreadful! (*To* EPIMETHEUS.) Do open the window and let them out.

[EPIMETHEUS *rushes to window, but* TROUBLES *force him back.*

Troubles. It is no use. We shall live here now. You will never get rid of us again.

Epimetheus. But you will spoil the Children's Paradise!

Troubles. It will not be the Children's Paradise any longer. It will be full of grown-ups—all the children will grow up in time—and you will all have to do lessons, and work, and get ill, and die!

Epimetheus. Oh, how terrible! And what a lot of you there are! Are you all Troubles?

Troubles. Yes.

Cares. We are the money troubles.

[*They whirl round children.*

Diseases. And we are the Diseases.

[*They whirl round CARES.*

Evil Passions (pushing other TROUBLES away, and pressing close to the children). And we are the Evil Passions.

Bad Temper. I am Bad Temper.

Epimetheus. What is Bad Temper?

Bad Temper (pricking him with antennæ). Now, you will know.

[EPIMETHEUS *rushes towards* PANDORA.

Hate and Spite. We are Hate and Spite.

[*They prick* PANDORA. EPIMETHEUS *pushes them aside.*

Epimetheus. Pandora, you are a wicked girl to have opened that box.

[*Hits her.*

Pandora. I hate you, Epimetheus! I wish I had never come to live with a cowardly boy like you, who would do nothing but scold me. Why did you not step forward sooner. You wanted to know what was in the box too!

[*Pinches him.*

Troubles (laughing). The Troubles are come, indeed!

Epimetheus (opening door). Go away!

Troubles (still laughing). We shall return!

[*Exeunt.* PANDORA *stands left centre, sobbing.* EPIMETHEUS *sits sulkily near door, after closing it with a bang.*

Epimetheus. They have gone at last!

Pandora. But they will return. O Epimetheus, I am unhappy!

Epimetheus. So am I; and if they are going to return we shall never be happy again.

Pandora. I wish I had never opened the box.

Epimetheus. You might at least have shut the lid again before they all escaped. O Pandora, how wretched we are! Life will be horrid now!

Pandora. I know. I can do nothing but cry.

Voice (inside box). Let me out!
Let me out!

Pandora. Why, there is one
Trouble left inside!

Voice. Let me out!

Epimetheus. We won't. We have
had enough of those wicked
Troubles.

Voice (laughing sweetly). I am not
a Trouble!

Pandora. Who are you?

Voice. Open the lid and you will
see.

Pandora. No, no! You are inside
that box, and there you shall stay.
I do not want any more stings.

Voice. I do not sting! Let me out!

Pandora (touching box). Shall I,
Epimetheus?

Epimetheus (sulkily). Do as you
like. You have done so much harm
already, I dare say it will not matter
if you do some more. Open it.

Pandora. How unkind you are,
Epimetheus. And you know I am
sorry I disobeyed you.

Epimetheus. Yet you want to do it
again. Well, you can, but I shall not
stay to be stung. [*Stands by door.*]

Voice. I come to do good. Let
me out, pretty Pandora!

Pandora. What a sweet voice!
Do help me to let her out, Epi-
metheus, my arm feels so weak from
the stings.

Epimetheus. I suppose I must help
you.

[PANDORA and EPIMETHEUS
lift lid. HOPE springs out
and at once starts to dance,
while children shut down lid
again very quickly.]

Pandora (watching HOPE'S dance).
Oh, what a lovely being!

*Epimetheus (running across to PAN-
DORA, and taking her hand).* You have
done wisely this time, Pandora
dear.

Pandora (smiling). How kind you
are, Epimetheus! I feel quite happy
again. How beautifully she dances,
and how happily she smiles! I
cannot help smiling when I look at
her.

Epimetheus. She makes me want
to sing!

[HOPE stands still, laughing.]

Pandora. Who are you?

Hope. I am Hope.

Epimetheus. How did you come
to be in that horrid box with all
those cruel Troubles?

Hope. I always dwell near the
Troubles, to be ready to heal their
stings.

Pandora. And have you come to
heal ours?

Hope. Of course. I have come to
make you friends again, and to show
that you can still be happy. As
long as I am with you, the Troubles
cannot hurt you.

Epimetheus. Your wings and your
dress are coloured like the rainbow.

Hope. That is because I am partly
made of tears and partly of smiles!

Pandora. Will you stay with us
for ever?

Hope. As long as you need me I
will never desert you.

Epimetheus. How glorious! I am
sure I shall be happy if I can always
see you.

Hope (retreating a little towards

window). You may not always see me clearly, and sometimes I may seem to be flying away from you, but the very glimmer of my wings will bring comfort to you.

Pandora. Why shall we not always see you?

Hope (*dreamily*). Because I am only a shadow!

Pandora and Epimetheus. Only a shadow!

Hope. Yes, the shadow of that infinite bliss which will come to you hereafter.

Pandora and Epimetheus. How wonderful! Now I feel quite happy.

Hope (*coming forward a little*). Then let us all dance before night falls.

Pandora. I do not want night to come.

Epimetheus. Nor do I.

Hope (*coming to front of stage*). What matters Night when Dawn is sure to follow?

CURTAIN.

the courtiers. History books illustrated by reliable artists will furnish numberless suggestions.

The Shadows.—There is no need for any special dress to represent the Shadows. All that is required is that they should have long, dark grey cloaks, and hoods to cover their heads.



FIG. 3



FIG. 4

The Snow-men.—As the name suggests, these characters must be made to appear like snow-men. They should all be dressed in white calico, with masks of the same material to cover their faces.

The Sunbeams.—The followers of Prince Sunlight should be dressed somewhat after the same style as their leader, only rather more simply. In their hands they can carry gilt wands, whilst in place of the sword they may wear short daggers.

THE FROZEN PALACE

CHARACTERS.

KING ARCTURUS.

QUEEN BOREALA.

PRINCESS AURORA, *their daughter.*

PRINCE SUNLIGHT.

THE FAIRY FROST.

JACK FROST, *her son.*

1ST SHADOW.

2ND SHADOW.

3RD SHADOW.

COURTIERS, SHADOWS, SUNBEAMS,
AND SNOW-MEN.

SCENE I.—*The Ballroom of the Palace.*
Doors R. and L. Two raised thrones
at back of stage. No furniture other-
wise.

SCENE II.—*Garden of the Palace.*
Entrances L. and R.

SCENE III.—*The Ballroom. Exactly*
as before, except that at the beginning
of the scene the stage should be very
dark.

SCENE I.—*The Ballroom of the Palace.*

Enter the KING and QUEEN.

They walk down to front of
stage.

King. My dear wife, I am very
much worried.

Queen. I felt certain that some-
thing was the matter when I saw
you leave half your ice-pudding at
the banquet. You are always so
fond of ice-pudding.

King. Yes, but to-day the ice-
pudding is the reason of my dis-
tress.

Queen. Has it given you tooth-
ache, then?

King. Nothing of that kind. It is
my mind which is troubled, Boreala.
The ice-pudding reminded me of
something very terrible.

Queen. Tell me what it is, dear.
Perhaps I can help you.

King. It is too late.

Queen. You quite frighten me.

King. In sending out the invita-
tions for our dear daughter Aurora's
birthday ball, we entirely forgot one
most important person.

Queen. Who is that?

King. Your step-great-grand-aunt,
the Fairy Frost. The ice-pudding
suddenly made me think of her.

Queen. How terribly careless of
us! She will be most dreadfully
offended.

King. She will; there is no doubt
whatever about that!

Queen. There is one thing to con-
sider, my dear husband; she really
cannot be much more disagreeable
when she is angry than when she
has no reason to be so. You re-
member we were most careful to
invite her to dear little Aurora's
christening. She did not bring the
sweet baby a present of any kind,
and she turned the poor Lord
Chancellor into a green frog because
he happened to tread on her toe.

King. I remember. It was *most*
awkward.

Queen. So I am really not sorry
that we did forget her.

King. N—n—no, my dear; but

still I cannot help being rather worried about it. These fairies are such curious people. You never know what they will do when they are offended, and you never know what will offend them. She is sure to find out about the ball. Why, there will be long accounts of it in all the papers.

Queen. Well, she will not hear anything until after it is over, that is one comfort. But you will make dear Aurora quite unhappy if you look so miserable. Do cheer up and smile; I hear the child coming.

Enter PRINCESS AURORA.

Princess. Oh, here you are! I could not think where you had both hidden yourselves. Why, father, how sad you look! (*The KING smiles broadly.*) And that is worse. You are only smiling with your mouth.

King. Oh, really, my dear child, I assure you that I am quite cheerful — most cheerful! Perfectly happy, in fact!

Princess. You certainly do not look as though you were. What is the matter, mother dear?

Queen. My dear child, your father and I forgot to send an invitation for the ball to a relation, and we are afraid that she may be—well—rather hurt.

King. It is *we* who are much more likely to be hurt—that is what *I* am frightened about.

Princess. Who is it?

Queen. Your step - great - grand - aunt, the Fairy Frost.

Princess. Oh, that old frump!

Queen. My child, do not speak so irreverently. Remember that she is a fairy!

Princess. Oh, fairies are very old-fashioned nowadays. She would have been quite out of place at the ball. And surely you do not believe that she can do us any harm?

Queen. I do not exactly believe it, but I am most horribly afraid of her.

King. It was before you can remember, my dear child, but when she came to your christening she turned our Lord Chancellor into a green frog; and he was a most respectable old man!

Princess. Oh, I expect it was only a conjuring trick of some kind.

King. Still, the fact remains that he *was* a green frog.

Queen. Well, we will not trouble about it any more. After all, my step - great - grand - aunt must be getting a very old fairy. Perhaps she does not read the papers now. We will ask her to dinner quietly by herself next week.

Princess. Now, do let us forget the old thing and begin to dance. My feet are quite cold with waiting, and our guests must be very impatient. I am going to dance first with my cousin, Sunlight. (*Runs to door, R.*) Come in! Come in, all of you! I cannot wait until you are announced. (*Takes hold of PRINCE SUNLIGHT'S hand and draws him in.*) Come, cousin, you and I will set them all a good example.

Queen (to KING). How bright and unconventional the dear child is!

[*The KING and QUEEN take their places on thrones at the back of stage. The PRINCESS and PRINCE SUNLIGHT stand R. The COURTIERs enter two and two, while a march is played. They bow and curtsy to the KING and QUEEN, and then separate to either side of the stage. Dance. (This may be either a minuet, gavotte, or some kind of fancy Lancers. It should be danced fairly slowly.) During the last movement there is a disturbance outside, and a loud voice is heard.*

Voice. I tell you I will enter! It is a fine thing if orders have been given to exclude the relations of the Queen!

Queen (rising from her seat). My dear, my dear, do you hear? The very worst has happened! My step-great-grand-aunt is here!

King. I was afraid of this. A few minutes ago I felt such a terribly cold draught from the door.

Enter FAIRY FROST and JACK FROST, L. The COURTIERs all shrink away to back and R. of stage. She remains standing by herself, glaring at the KING and QUEEN. The PRINCESS and PRINCE SUNLIGHT stand together to R. of throne.

Fairy Frost. So this is the way you treat your step-great-grand-aunt, you unnatural, ungrateful woman! You give a ball to the whole country and omit to ask your

nearest and dearest relative! And after all that I have done for you too!

Queen. Yes, we—we—*thought* of all that you did for us last time you came, and we were *very* sorry that we had forgotten to ask you.

Fairy Frost. Yes, I should have thought that my visit would have made an impression on you. But I shall see to it that you do not forget me in the future.

King. I assure you it shall not happen again.

Fairy Frost. It shall not. I will make certain of that.

Queen. Will you not join us now? Then we can have a pleasant, quiet evening.

Fairy Frost. Oh, we will have a pleasant, quiet evening, I promise you!

King. Really, it—it—we meant it for the best. You see, we know that you are so delicate and feel the heat so much. We thought that the warmth of the room might make you ill, and then we should never have forgiven ourselves.

Fairy Frost. Oh, you need not be afraid! I can look after myself—and you too. If you think to melt me in that way, you are mistaken. And—who do I see there? (*Peering at PRINCE SUNLIGHT.*) Oh, this is too much! Not content with forgetting me, you actually insult me by inviting my bitterest enemy. Oh, I will punish you for this, my dear niece!

Queen. Go—go, Sunlight, you only make her more angry. Yes, yes,

my dear aunt, he shall go. He will not stay another minute.

Prince Sunlight (aside). But can I not help you?

King. I am afraid that just now you will only make matters worse if you stay here, my boy. Perhaps she will be calmer when you are gone.

Princess. Good-bye, dear Sunlight. Come back as soon as you can.

[PRINCE SUNLIGHT bows low to KING and QUEEN, and kisses the hand of PRINCESS. Exit R.]

Fairy Frost. And now let me think what I can do to make you have better memories next time. If I wished I could turn you all into green frogs—aha! you remember, my dear niece and nephew?

Queen. Oh, please don't! I do so hate frogs!

Fairy Frost. Oh, there are ever so many things that I might do, but I will be very kind and merciful. I will only do one little thing—quite a pleasant little thing. I am sure that you would all be glad if you could remain for ever just as you are now, and never grow old, or ill, or ugly. Well, you shall. That is all the harm that I will do to you. (FAIRY FROST waves her wand.) I command that you all be frozen into solid ice! (As she speaks the KING, QUEEN, PRINCESS, and all the COURTIERs stiffen in the attitudes in which they are standing and remain perfectly still.) To you, my brave son Jack, I give the charge of guard-

ing the Palace. Go and set sentinels at all the gates, so that no one may pass, and afterwards keep watch here yourself. (Exit JACK FROST, L. Waving her hand again.) Spirits of Ice and Snow, come to my aid. Let the snow fall and freeze until all the Palace is covered, so that no light may enter!

[As she speaks the stage becomes darker and darker, till at last she is barely visible.]

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.—The Palace Gardens.

Entrances L. and R.

Enter the SHADOWS. They slip in one by one, very softly. A dance of the SHADOWS can here be effectively introduced. It should be danced to very soft, slow music, and the stage should be in half darkness. At the conclusion, the SHADOWS sink down upon the ground.

1st Shadow. Oh, brother and sister shadows, I am very, very tired! It is terribly dull in the Palace now.

2nd Shadow. Yes, since my dear little mistress, Princess Aurora, was frozen I have had no work and no play. I shall soon fade away and die. Just see how thin I have become.

3rd Shadow. Nobody seems to need us now. Snow covers all the windows of the Palace, so that everything is dark and cold—oh, so cold!

1st Shadow. If it were not for these few hours in the night, when

we are allowed to leave the Palace, it would be impossible to bear it. But we are all growing so weak, that soon we shall not be able to run or dance even then.

2nd Shadow. How I wish that we could do something to help those in the Palace, so that they might be melted! Then everybody would be happy again together. But there is nothing that we can do—we are only shadows.

All. Yes, we are only shadows.

3rd Shadow. Look, brothers and sisters, there is a light amongst the trees. It must be morning. See, it is Prince Sunlight who is coming!

1st Shadow. Quick, quick, we must hasten back to the Palace! Our time of freedom is almost over.

Enter PRINCE SUNLIGHT, R. As he comes in the SHADOWS crowd away towards the entrance, L., as though in fear.

Prince Sunlight (coming forward to centre of stage and holding out his hands to the SHADOWS). Stay! Do not go! Will you not wait and speak one word to me? I heard you say that you must return to the Palace. Do you indeed live there, and can you give me news of those within?

1st Shadow. Yes, we are the shadows of all the people who are shut up there, frozen and silent—and very sad and dull it is for us.

2nd Shadow. But I should not mind that so very much if it did not make me so miserable to see my dear little mistress, Princess Aurora, standing there all cold and still.

Prince Sunlight. Oh, my dear Aurora! And you may go in and out of the Palace as you please?

3rd Shadow. Every night we are allowed to pass out, but we must return before daybreak. You see, we are only shadows.

All. Yes, we are only shadows.

Prince Sunlight. Ah, how I envy you! What would I not give if I could only enter like you! Each day at earliest dawn I come here. I linger around the Palace until nightfall, hoping that I may perhaps find some means of passing in. But each day I grow more and more hopeless. The barriers of snow and ice stand firm, and I cannot move them. The guards hold the gates securely, and I and my followers may not enter. Oh, I fear that never, never shall I see my dear Aurora again!

3rd Shadow. Ah, Prince Sunlight, if only you could force your way into the Palace and melt our Princess, and all those who are with her, how happy we should be! But it is impossible. The guard is so strong, and no one except ourselves may go in. They know that we can do neither harm nor good, because we are only shadows.

All. Yes, we are only shadows.

2nd Shadow. Listen, listen, brothers and sisters, I have a plan. We may be able to save our masters and mistresses, even though we *are* only shadows. What if the Prince and his followers, the Sunbeams, should enter the Palace in our place? If they were dressed in our

cloaks and hoods no one would think that they were anything but shadows.

3rd Shadow. And if he once passed the guards it would be easy for the Prince to vanquish Jack Frost.

Prince Sunlight. Ah, if only it were possible! I would do anything to save my dearest Aurora.

1st Shadow. But, brothers and sisters, what will become of us if the Prince and his followers fail? We cannot enter the Palace without our cloaks, and if the day breaks and we are still outside, you know that we shall fade away and die before night comes once more.

2nd Shadow. We must not think of that. At least we shall have tried our best to save all those in the Palace, although we are only their shadows.

Prince Sunlight. Bravely spoken! I am ready to try. I believe that the plan will succeed.

1st Shadow. Day is breaking. We dare not wait here longer.

2nd Shadow. But to-night we will return at the hour of twilight, and you and your followers shall creep into the Palace in our place, dressed in our dark cloaks.

3rd Shadow. And if the ice is melted and we and our masters and mistresses can all move and dance together once more, we shall soon grow strong and well again.

1st Shadow. Come, come! we must go! It is almost morning! The Prince's followers are here.

[Exit the SHADOWS, L., very softly. As they vanish the SUNBEAMS enter R. PRINCE SUNLIGHT sits on grassy

mound, L. Dance of SUNBEAMS. At the close of the dance, the PRINCE rises and comes down to centre, front. They crowd around him.

Prince Sunlight. Dear Sunbeams, listen. I have work for you. As you know, our great enemy the Fairy Frost has laid a spell on all those in the Palace yonder. They are turned to solid ice, and snow covers the Palace, so that no warmth or light may enter. You know well for how long I have sought to find some way to pass through the guards who surround the Princess Aurora and all those others, and to destroy the evil power of the Fairy Frost. At last I have found a way! The shadows of those in the Palace can pass to and fro in the night-time as they will, and they have agreed to help us. To-night we shall enter instead of them, wearing their cloaks to hide our shining dresses. Once in the Palace we will make short work of Jack Frost and the snow-men who form his guard. What do you say, brave Sunbeams?

All. We are ready! We will gladly follow our Prince wherever he leads us!

Prince Sunlight. It is agreed then. Now, we must go to our work. This evening, before night falls, meet me here once again, and we will go to the rescue of Aurora with brave hearts.

[Exit SUNBEAMS and PRINCE SUNLIGHT.

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.—*The Palace Ballroom.*

The stage should be very faintly lighted, so that figures are only dimly visible. The KING, QUEEN, PRINCESS, and COURTIERs stand motionless, exactly as at the end of Scene I. JACK FROST and the SNOW-MEN pace up and down.

Enter FAIRY FROST.

Fairy Frost. Ah, my dear Jack, at your duty as usual. That is my brave boy. How delightfully cold it is in here! Quite like the Arctic regions, and just as I like it. There is no fear of getting warm in this temperature. *(She goes from one to the other of the frozen figures, touching them with the tips of her fingers.)* Aha! aha! Still cold and frozen! It was an evil day for all of you when you offended me! *(Returning to front.)* You have kept my orders carefully, I hope? No one has been allowed to pass the gates?

Jack. I should like to see any one try to enter except the Shadows. They go in and out as they please, but that does not matter.

Fairy Frost. Oh, they can do no harm! There is no need for us to be afraid of shadows! I saw that conceited young rival of yours, Prince Sunlight, outside the Palace. He looks quite pale and anxious. Ho! ho! ho! He would think it a grand thing if he could get in and rescue our pretty Princess here—he and his fine Sunbeams! Aha! there is no fear that our guards will let him pass.

Jack. How I hate him! He always tries to spoil my fun.

Fairy Frost. You have beaten him this time, my brave Jack. He will not get his own way here.

Jack. Yes, I think that now he will not be able to slip in, in his sneaking way. There is not a crack where a Sunbeam can enter.

Enter PRINCE SUNLIGHT and the SUNBEAMS. They are dressed in the SHADOWS' cloaks, which cover them entirely. They creep in very softly.

Jack. You have returned early. You are easily tired to-night, Shadows.

Prince Sunlight (in very low voice). Yes, we are very weary.

[They creep closer to FAIRY FROST, JACK FROST, and the SNOW-MEN.]

Fairy Frost. It seems to me that the air is growing unpleasantly warm. There is a most disagreeable feeling of heat.

Jack. You must be feverish, mother; and yet, I notice that it grows rather oppressive.

[PRINCE SUNLIGHT and the SUNBEAMS fling off their cloaks all together. At the same moment, the lights should be turned up on the stage.]

Prince Sunlight. Come, my brave Sunbeams, help me to conquer our enemies!

[He draws his sword. The SUNBEAMS attack the SNOW-MEN with their wands. As

soon as PRINCE SUNLIGHT touches them, FAIRY FROST and JACK FROST begin to shake and tremble.

Fairy Frost. Oh, help! help! Treachery! Stand fast, guards!

Jack (falling on his knees before PRINCE SUNLIGHT). Oh, spare me! spare me! Don't melt me! Don't make me turn to water! It was my mother's fault. Oh, I only obeyed her orders!

Fairy Frost (sinking down to the ground). Oh, I am melting! All the ice is going out of me. Do not kill me—oh, do not kill me! We will go. We will leave the Palace and never, never return.

Prince Sunlight. Will you swear never to attempt to enter this place again?

Both. Yes, yes, we swear it!

Prince Sunlight. Then you may go! Drive them out, Sunbeams. (*The SUNBEAMS drive out FAIRY FROST, JACK FROST, and the SNOWMEN with their wands.*) Come, now, and help me to melt all these poor people whom the wicked fairies have frozen.

[*The SUNBEAMS touch each of the COURTIERs with their wands. PRINCE SUNLIGHT touches the KING and QUEEN with his sword, and takes the PRINCESS by the hand. They all begin to move, very slowly and stiffly.*

King. O—h—h! How cramped I am! I must have fallen asleep and let the fire go out.

Queen. I believe that I have

influenza coming on. (*Shivering.*) Oh, I'm shivering all over!

Princess. And my feet feel just like pieces of ice!

King. But—but—(*looking round surprised*)—why are we in the ballroom? It must be terribly draughty.

Queen. My dear, I am beginning to remember that something terrible happened at the ball.

King. Of course, of course. It was something to do with your step-great-grand-aunt.

Princess. Yes, yes! Oh, father, mother, you must remember. She was angry, and she turned us all to ice. Oh, how dreadful it was!

King. That accounts for our feeling so cold, of course. I suppose that we are not really quite thawed yet, my dear.

Princess. O Sunlight, you have saved us!

Queen. Yes, we cannot tell you how grateful we are!

King. It is such a comfort to see any one who looks so delightfully warm!

Princess. And have you really sent away that horrible old Fairy, dear Sunlight? Will she never come back again?

Prince Sunlight. I can promise you that she will never enter the Palace again, dearest Aurora. But it is not I and my Sunbeams alone whom you must thank for your deliverance. There were others who helped you far more. Go, Sunbeams, and bring back the

Shadows! (*The SUNBEAMS run out, carrying the cloaks of the SHADOWS.*)

It is possible that I might never have found a way to save you had it not been for your faithful Shadows. It was in their dress that we passed the guards at the Palace gates, who would otherwise have barred our way.

Enter the SUNBEAMS and the SHADOWS.

King. We are indeed grateful to you for all that you have done, my brave Shadows.

2nd Shadow. It makes us very happy, your Majesties, to think that we have been able to help you and our dear Princess. After all, it is

not much that we could do; we are only shadows.

All. Yes, we are only shadows.

Princess. And now let us all dance to warm ourselves. I shall be quite frozen again if I stand here much longer!

Prince Sunlight. You will be my partner again, dear Aurora, and this time you will not make me leave you.

Princess. No, no, dearest Sunlight! You must never leave us again, now that we are all happy together once more.

DANCE.

At the conclusion of the dance the curtain falls.

WON

By KATE HARVEY

Author of "The Coal-Scuttle"

THE whole action of "Won" takes place in a forest glade, which may be made with the scenery described in "Health, Wealth, and Happiness." If considered desirable the back-cloth and wings can be slightly altered, several of the spaces between the tree-trunks in the former being cut out and subsidiary scenery placed behind the openings. Upon the rising of the curtain, Titania and her fairies are found asleep on a bank built up in a very similar fashion to that described in "The Mushroom Meadow." In place of the long tufts of cardboard grass, fronds of fern and low bushes should be tacked along the upper edge, as illustrated in Fig. 1; whilst the floor must be covered with canvas painted green, to resemble the



FIG. 1

luxurious carpet of the forest glade. Every precaution must be taken to ensure strength and stability for this bank, and rather than risk any disaster it would be better to employ a proper carpenter to build it and fix the stays securely.

COSTUMES

Oberon.—The costumes for the fairies can be studied from any illustrated edition of "A Midsummer Night's Dream." The simple but effective dress for their king, shown in Fig. 2, can be made with very little difficulty. It consists of a white tunic, white trunks with flesh-coloured tights—long stockings if preferred—and sandals. The arms are bare, and a blue cloak hangs from the shoulders, reaching to just below the knees. A couple of gold bands should be crossed over his chest, a large brooch in the centre keeping them in position, whilst the pointed collar around his neck is surmounted with a golden chain. Butterfly wings made of gauze stretched upon a

wire framework should be fastened to the shoulders, whilst the pointed crown, made of silver paper wound round wire, and the small wings for the ear can be made all of one piece and fastened to the head with a ribbon.

Titania.—There is considerable scope for the indulgence of artistic taste in designing the costume for Titania. A suggestion of what might be done is depicted in Fig. 3, which may be briefly described thus: A large silvery garment of gauze, upon a delicately coloured foundation, is wound across the body, as in the illustration, and reaches to just above the ankles, where the bottom of a pale blue underskirt is visible. Her arms and neck are bare, although she may carry a light



FIG. 2



FIG. 3

blue trailing scarf over her left arm. Similar wings to those made for Oberon should be fastened to her shoulder, whilst a garland of roses, with here and there a large leaf, can be bound around her head. As Queen of the Fairies, Titania should carry a long wand tipped with a large foxglove.

Puck.—This part should, if possible, be given to a little boy, whose costume may consist of a green tunic and wings, green trunks and hose, and green pointed shoes. A small red cap adorned with a feather and a red belt will serve to distinguish Puck from his brother elves.

Fairies and Elves.—The dresses for these characters may be built upon those of Titania and Puck, small differences being introduced to prevent any confusion. The fairies, for example, can have coloured dresses, while the elves may be all in green, belts and caps included.

Bookworms.—The three boy Bookworms should be dressed in very sober fashion, as becomes such learned young people. With their hair parted in the middle and plastered down on each side, great goggle spectacles and large books under their arms, they will present a very scholarly appearance. The girls, also wearing spectacles, should have their hair in tight pig-tails, and appear very prim and uninteresting.

The Boys and Girls.—Ordinary clothes will be suitable for the boys and girls who rush on the stage trying to persuade the Bookworms to play.

Little Bo-Peep.—This little shepherdess should wear a plain white frock, bound

SIDE VIEW



FIG. 4



FIG. 5

round the waist with a blue sash; her arms and legs must be bare, and her hair flowing loose over her shoulders or gathered up with a blue ribbon. In her hand she must carry a long crook ornamented with a large blue bow.

Jack Horner.—Almost any plain suit will serve for Jack Horner. He must have a contented, rosy face, and carry an empty pie-dish in his hand.

Miss Muffet.—A rather rich dress will prove the most suitable for little Miss Muffet. She should carry an empty bowl, and make her appearance upon the stage looking nervously from side to side, as though in dread of seeing the spider.

Humpty-Dumpty.—An idea of Humpty-Dumpty's costume is given in Fig. 4. He should wear a black sleeveless tunic or jersey, orange-coloured trunks and tights, upon his chest and back being two large white pieces of cardboard cut in the shape of

eggs, and fastened to the body by little bands. To give the appearance of baldness he must wear a large white skull-cap, somewhat similar in shape to those worn by Pierrots. The eyebrows may be made up very arched.

Mary Quite Contrary.—Mary can wear a simple frock of any plain colour, ornamented with a fringe of white cockle-shells and flowers.

Old King Cole.—This merry monarch, whose portrait is given in Fig. 5, wears a brocaded red tunic and trunks, the latter being slashed white on brocade. On his legs are white tights, whilst the feet are encased in shoes adorned with large rosettes. The brocaded sleeves of his tunic have white puffs at the shoulders and elbows, and terminate in white frills around his wrist. King Cole should be made up with long curling white locks and a big bushy beard, his head being surmounted by a pointed crown tilted somewhat jauntily upon one side. In his right hand is a sceptre, whilst in his left he carries a large, white churchwarden pipe.

WON

CHARACTERS.

OBERON.

TITANIA.

PUCK.

FAIRIES.

ELVES.

SIX BOOKWORMS.

BOYS AND GIRLS.

BO-PEEP.

JACK HORNER.

MISS MUFFET.

HUMPTY-DUMPTY.

MARY QUITE CONTRARY.

OLD KING COLE.

SCENE.—A Forest

Bank on which **TITANIA** *and*
FAIRIES *sleep. Soft fairy*
music is heard, which gradually
dies away as **OBERON** *enters*
with his **ELVES**, *and* **PUCK**
in attendance.

Oberon. You jest.

Puck. No, indeed it's true!

Oberon. 'Tis almost past believing.
So young, and yet so ignorant.

Puck (pretending to cry). "So
young, and yet so ignorant!"

Oberon. Do they *never* read a
nursery rhyme? A fairy tale?

Puck (shocked). Your Majesty, you
jest! (*Rolls up his eyes.*) A nursery
rhyme! (*Suddenly bursts into roars*
of laughter.) O—oh, o—o—oh, if
they *did!* Oh—oh—o—o—oh, it
would be like *this.* (*Stands straight,*
puts his hands behind him, and repeats
mechanically.)

Jack mounts a precipitous incline,
A receptacle of metal for to fill;
Jill perambulates quite close behind,
Hoping to reach the summit of the
—mountain!

O—o—oh!! o—o—oh!

Titania (wakes, stretches, yawns,
then rises). What harsh sounds are
these that fall upon my ear?

Oberon. My Titania, dost thou wake? Come, my Queen, I need thy help. We have no *easy* task before us.

Titania. My Oberon, command me ever. I have *no* will but *thine*.

[PUCK *sniggers*.

Oberon (*catching hold of him*). Puck! (PUCK *pulls himself up sharply*.) (*Severely*.) Tell her Majesty what you have seen.

Puck. Six spectacled and bookish beings who like, positively *like*, dry 'ologies; who dislike, positively *dislike*, fairy tales.

Titania. 'Tis monstrous!

Oberon (*walks up and down*). They must be cured without delay. Such sickness calls for speedy remedy. Puck, away! spirit them hither!

Puck. Ere thou canst blink thrice, they shall be here!

[*Goes out, and returns with the BOOKWORMS, carrying books under their right arms and stools in their left hands. Following PUCK, they march across the stage front; place the stools in a row, and sit on them facing the audience.*

Puck (*stands before them and shakes a fist sternly*). Now you've got to believe in fairies.

[BOOKWORMS *look up and down, put their hands behind their ears and listen*.

1st Bookworm. Who mentioned (*scornfully*) fairies?

Other Bookworms (*shake their heads solemnly*). Certainly we did not.

They place their books on their knees, put their hands behind them, and repeat altogether in a sing-song tone—

We know *nothing* about fairies,
We know *nothing* about elves;
We're crammed so full of 'ologies,
We hardly know ourselves!

We are fairly *stuffed* with Latin,
And our heads just burst with Greek;
We can rattle off our tables
Enough to make you shriek.

There's no question you can ask us
That we cannot answer "pat";
Mathematics is as easy
As spelling "dog" or "cat."

We know *nothing* about fairies,
We know *nothing* about elves;
We're crammed so full of 'ologies,
We hardly know ourselves!

[*With a smirk they bring their hands forward, open their books and start reading. All these actions must be carried out in strict time, and very precisely. Groups of merry boys and girls rush in, six R., six L.*

Boys and Girls (*sing*).

Girls and boys come out to play,
The moon doth shine as bright as day.
Come with a whoop and come with a call,
Come with a good will or not at all.

[*They hold hands and dance round stools, beckoning to the BOOKWORMS to join them. These sit with their noses tilted superciliously, and read more assiduously than ever.*

Boys and Girls (*at end of song*).
Come, come! come!

1st Bookworm. We never play!

Rest of Bookworms (*virtuously*).

And never want to!

Boys and Girls. How terrible!

Youngest Girl (*persuasively*). Won't you come?

Bookworms (*drawing themselves up*). Certainly not!

Boys and Girls (*rush off, six R., six L., in high spirits*). We are sorry for you.

Titania (*comes forward with her sweetest smile*). Now you see them, you must believe in fairies.

3rd Bookworm (*to 4th BOOKWORM*). Silence, you distract me!

5th Bookworm (*to 4th BOOKWORM*). Don't disturb me; I want to understand how to extract this cube root.

4th Bookworm (*indignantly*). I didn't enunciate a word!

3rd Bookworm. Veracity should be cultivated upon every occasion.

Chorus of Four Bookworms. Silence, you distract us!

Titania (*turns to OBERON in bewilderment*). By my fairy crown, they cannot see me!

Oberon. Grieve not, my Queen; not of one plant only do I know the magic charm. (*Signs to PUCK*.) See'st thou yonder mountain-top?

Puck. I see.

Oberon. Fly swifter than the swiftest thought, and from its summit bring a flower called "Bright-eye." We'll squeeze its juice upon the eyelids of these singularly peculiar children. I'll stake my fairy kingdom on the issue!

Puck. I go, swift as thought—I go!

[*Goes, and returns with the flower. OBERON takes half of it, and they start one at either end of the row of BOOKWORMS, dropping the juice upon their eyelids quickly one after the other from behind. TITANIA, FAIRIES, and ELVES run in front of BOOKWORMS and pose. BOOKWORMS look incredulously, take off their spectacles, clean them and put them on again; then take them off once more and rub their eyes, look again, then emphatically nod their heads at one another, saying.*

Bookworms. We will not (*stamp*) believe in fairies,

We will not (*stamp*) believe in elves;

We're crammed too full of 'ologies To wish to know ourselves.

Oberon (*marches off in high dudgeon with his ELVES to L.*) Then you'll be the losers.

Bookworms. We will stuff ourselves with Latin, And our heads shall burst with Greek.

(*To one another.*) Let us rattle off our tables

And make these fairies squeak.

Titania (*greatly annoyed*). I protest, my court is not a company of mice.

[BOOKWORMS rise, place books on stools and wheel round, three girls face ELVES, three boys face FAIRIES.

You can ask us any question, We will answer you quite pat.

Then we'll put you thro' your paces,

A game of "tit" for "tat"!

Fairies and Elves (disdainfully).
We're not going to play a game of that sort!

[*An ELF or FAIRY runs to each BOOKWORM and shakes him or her, saying.*

Fairies and Elves. Now you shall believe in fairies,
Now you shall believe in elves;
We will change your bookish natures,
We'll make you know yourselves.

[*BOOKWORMS indignantly fling off the FAIRIES and ELVES, pick up their books, reseal themselves and start reading diligently. FAIRIES retire in a huff and pose behind.*

Titania. They're incorrigible.

Oberon. Patience, my Titania, we have other means at our disposal.

Titania (pouts). They're such little prigs.

Oberon. Surface, my Queen—surface! We are going to find the child beneath.

Titania (pettishly). How?

Oberon (considers). We will call our friends of the nursery rhymes to help us. Waft your fairy wishes to Bo-Peep; we'll bring her first.

[*TITANIA and FAIRIES wave arms gracefully, and chant low and soft through music.*

Titania and Fairies. Bo-Peep, Bo-Peep, Bo-Peep!

[*BO-PEEP appears to R., weeping, and FAIRIES sing the nursery rhyme to action.*

PUCK must work mischief, mimic, &c., throughout these nursery rhymes.

Fairies. Little Bo-Peep has lost her sheep,
And doesn't know where to find them.

Leave them alone and they'll come home,

And bring their tails behind them.

[*BO-PEEP tries to entice the 6th BOOKWORM, a boy, to come away with her. He resists her blandishments for some while, then yields; looks round to make sure none of the other BOOKWORMS notice what he is doing; puts his book gently on his stool, and goes off affectionately with BO-PEEP.*

Titania and Fairies (wave their arms to her and chant through music).
Well done, Bo-Peep! (*Soft and low.*) Good-bye, Bo-Peep!

Titania (gives a sigh of relief).
There's one at any rate.

Oberon. And more will follow.
Try Jack Horner.

Titania and Fairies (waft their wands and call quickly and sharply).
Jack Horner!

[*JACK HORNER skips in brightly. FAIRIES sing nursery rhyme to action.*

Fairies. Little Jack Horner
Sat in a corner,
Eating his Christmas pie.
He put in his thumb
And pulled out a plum,
And said, "What a good boy
am I."

[JACK tries to induce 5th BOOKWORM, a girl, to come with him. She resists, but in the end yields, and runs off with him, laughing.

Fairies (through music). Bravo ! bravo ! Good-bye, dear Jack—good-bye !

Oberon. You see, my Queen, they can't resist these oldest friends of ours. Call some one else ; who shall it be ?

Titania. My dear little friend Miss Muffet.

Titania and Fairies (wave and chant rather monotonously). Little Miss Muffet ! Yes, little Miss Muffet.

[MISS MUFFET appears, and the FAIRIES sing the nursery rhyme to action.

Little Miss Muffet

She sat on a tuffet,

Eating of curds and whey.

There came a big spider

And sat down beside her,

And frightened Miss Muffet away.

[MISS MUFFET entices the 4th BOOKWORM, a boy, to go off with her, which he does, after much persuasion.

Fairies (through music). Good-bye, Miss Muffet—good-bye !

Titania. Ah, my little Miss Muffet is a most fascinating child.

Oberon. Now send for Humpty-Dumpty, my friend.

Titania and Fairies (wave, and chant slowly and solemnly). Humpty-Dumpty !

[HUMPTY-DUMPTY marches in slowly and solemnly. FAIRIES sing rhyme to action.

Fairies. Humpty-Dumpty sat on a wall,

Humpty-Dumpty had a great fall.

All the king's horses and all the king's men

Couldn't put Humpty together again.

[He induces the 3rd BOOKWORM to leave her book. They march off together, solemnly.

Fairies (through music). Farewell, our Humpty-Dumpty !

[Just as HUMPTY-DUMPTY and the BOOKWORM are disappearing HUMPTY-DUMPTY falls and cracks. FAIRIES and ELVES all look solemn, and repeat from "Had a great fall."

Oberon. Alas, my Humpty-Dumpty !

[They all weep as ELVES fly to HUMPTY-DUMPTY, and carry or support him out.

Titania. I think we'll call my contrary little Mary this time.

Titania and Fairies (wave wands and call). Mary, Mary, Mary !

[Mary comes on in a very "contrary" fashion. FAIRIES sing nursery rhyme to action.

Mary, Mary quite contrary,

How does your garden grow ?

Silver bells and cockle-shells

And sweet maids all in a row.

She enters, and woos the 2nd BOOKWORM in a "contrary" fashion to go with her.

Fairies (through music). Good-bye, contrary Mary !

Oberon. And now we'll call for that jolly old soul, King Cole.

Titania and Fairies (wave, and sing lustily through music). Old King Cole!

[OLD KING COLE *rollicks on.*
FAIRIES *sing nursery rhyme to action.*

Old King Cole was a jolly old soul!

A jolly old soul was he.

He called for his pipe,

He called for his bowl,

And he called for his fiddlers three.

[*He entices 1st BOOKWORM to come with him. She repels his advances. Suddenly she discovers that the other BOOKWORMS have gone. Very indignantly she tries to gather up all their books and carry them off, but she drops one, and as she stoops to pick it up another falls, and so she goes on until she gets very angry.*

1st Bookworm (at intervals). I won't believe in fairies! I won't believe . . . I won't be . . . I won . . . (*Flings the whole pile of books on the ground.*) Both the old books!—(*flings her spectacles after them*)—and the old specs! (*Looks round coyly at OLD KING COLE, and suddenly clasps her hands.*) Oh, I do believe in fairies!

[*Catches hold of OLD KING COLE'S hand, and they run off joyfully together.*

Oberon (to ELVES). Clear away that rubbish.

[*Six ELVES and six FAIRIES run forward, pick up books and stools very disdainfully, and run off with them. PUCK picks up the spectacles, puts them on, and mimics the BOOKWORMS.*

Titania (sighs happily). That's a good day's work! Every one converted!

Oberon. All are won!

Fairies (with shrieks of horror as they shield their faces, as if for a blow.) Spare us, spare us, Oberon!

Titania (calmly ignoring the pun). Shall we see the little dears again?

Oberon (smiles). Listen!

[*"Boys and Girls," &c., heard. CHILDREN and BOOKWORMS run on to the stage joyfully singing and playing "tag." BOOKWORMS have no spectacles on, and their hair is dressed prettily. At the end of rhyme BOOKWORMS bow low to TITANIA and OBERON, warmly embrace FAIRIES and ELVES; then run to front of stage, face audience, and recite.*

Oh, we do believe in fairies!

Oh, we do believe in elves!

And now we're jolly children,

Just like your happy selves!

[*OBERON and TITANIA join hands and stand up behind. They sign to FAIRIES and ELVES, who surround BOOKWORMS in a ring and sing.*

SONG.

Never harm shall near thee be,
Fairy luck has come to thee.
Hand in hand, a dainty ring,
Blessings to thy life we bring.

“Sing and dance we trippingly,
Light as bird hops from a tree.”

Peace and safety be thy lot,
Pain or evil harm thee not,
Perfect shall thy manners be,
Full of charm and courtesy!

“Sing and dance we trippingly,
Light as bird hops from a tree.”

DANCE.

CHILDREN *and* BOOKWORMS,
ELVES *and* FAIRIES, TITANIA, OBE-
RON, *and* PUCK. *Nursery rhyme,*
CHILDREN *run in, three R., three L.*

TABLEAU.

CURTAIN.

KING UGGERMUGGER

Adapted from "Prince Ubbely Bubble's Fairy Tales," with the kind permission of Messrs. Frederick Warne & Co.

By H. BEATRICE GRIFFITHS

THIS play is divided into five scenes, the first, third, and fifth of which take place in the garden of Waxidoll Palace. The back-cloth and wings representing this can be adapted from that described in connection with "The Frozen Palace."

The second scene is laid outside the Cave of the Old Man. This should be made up of the forest back-cloth and wings described in "Health, Wealth, and Happiness," together with a set piece made of a flat, as shown in Fig. 1. This set piece depicts the rocks amongst which the Old Man's Cave is situated, and should contain an opening, the entrance to which is painted as shown in the figure. A piece of black cloth fastened within the mouth of the cave will give the effect of the depths in which the Old Man lives.

Scene iv. takes place upon the top of the Inaccessible Mountains, which can be depicted with Alpine effect, Fig. 2. The tops of the mountains are snow-capped, and at their bases the gradual appearance of trees is marked by patches of green.

The wings upon either side, Fig. 3, should be occupied by views of similar landscape.

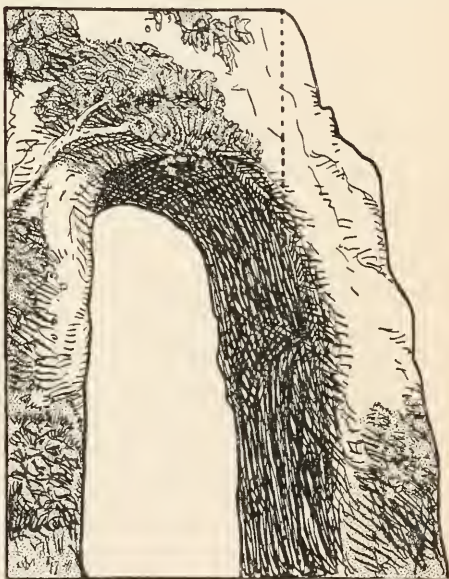


FIG. 1

COSTUMES

King Uggermugger.—The extraordinary ugliness of this worthy monarch will have to be rendered by means of a grotesque mask, somewhat similar to that shown in Fig. 4. A golden crown with pointed ears attached thereto is worn over the head, partly covering bushy locks sewn in a fringe to the edge of the mask. The King himself should wear a long tunic reaching to below the knees and gathered in at

the waist, with an ornamental belt from which hangs a sword. This tunic should be bordered with imitation ermine made of white fur cut from an old muff, with pieces of black wool sewn to it. His legs should be encased in white tights, whilst over his back must be thrown a red cloak with an ermine collar.

Dobbie.—Although not a live character, it may be as well to point out that Dobbie, King Uggermugger's horse, should be a large white wooden horse which, when beautified, may be given a mane of magenta-coloured fringe and a skein of yellow wool for a tail.

Blacazinc.—This gentleman, as his name implies, may have a blackened face.

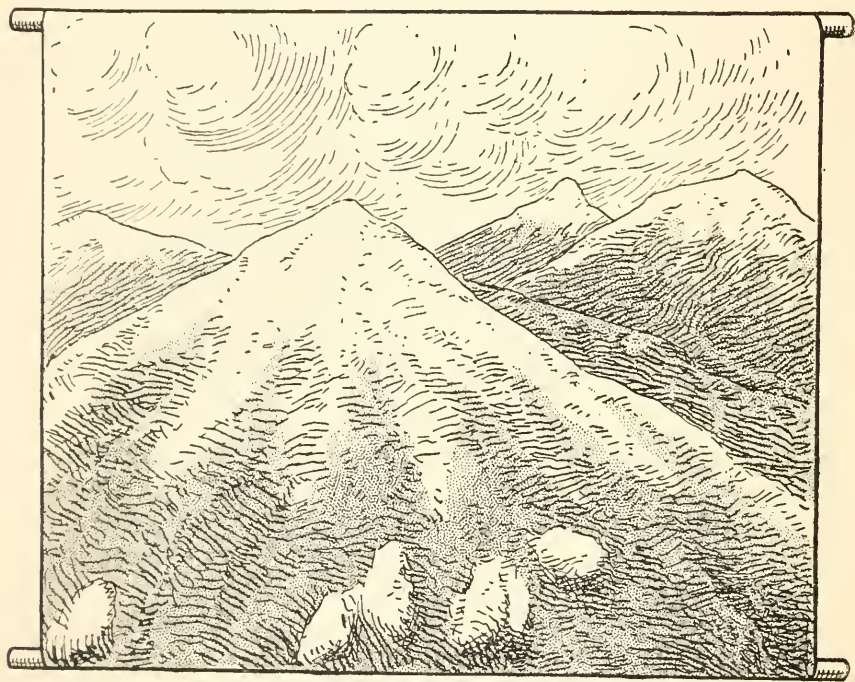


FIG. 2

He should wear a pinked jerkin, slashed trunks and tights, whilst from his shoulders a short cloak should hang, leaving his arms perfectly free. With a cavalier hat adorned with a feather, the Rajah will present a striking appearance.

Blue Eyes.—The court lady upon whom the Rajah Blacazinc has clearly made an impression may wear an Empire frock bound with black velvet, a Peter Pan collar, and large frilled hat tilted up in front.

Princess Silversilk.—An idea of this lady's dress is given in Fig. 5. It consists of a zouave with embroidery sleeves reaching to the elbow, whence lace drops to the wrist. Her skirt should be of thin silk, with an embroidered band round the bottom. A long belt hanging low over the hips and with the ends reaching to the ground in front, together with a coronet on her head, will complete the costume. A long gauze

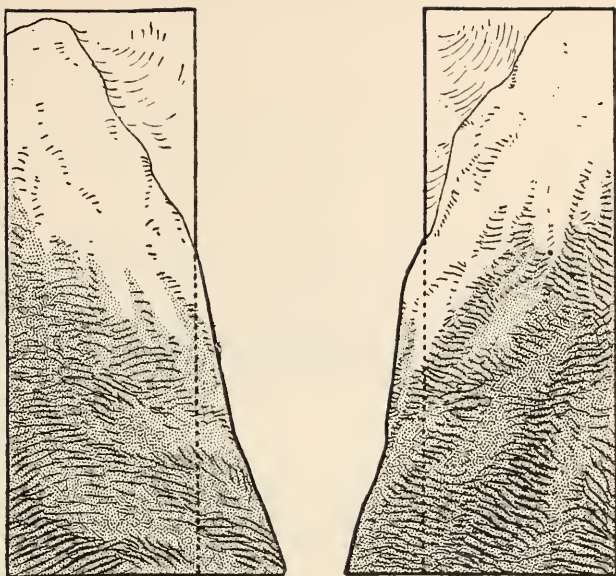


FIG. 3



FIG. 4



FIG. 5



FIG. 6

train, spangled here and there with silver crescents, would, however, prove an effective addition to her dress.

The Old Man of the Cave.—This old villain should have a long black cloak, not unlike a monk's cowl, with baggy sleeves. His head must be made up as bald, with a long beard reaching to his feet. This beard must be cut in two about half-way, and the two pieces lightly attached to one another with cotton, as shown in Fig. 6.

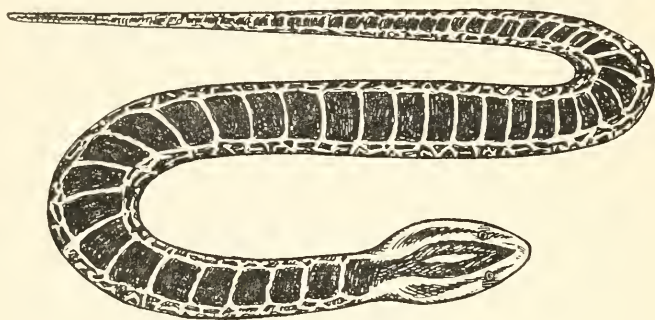


FIG. 7

These can be cut at the critical moment, thus giving the effect of King Uggermugger chopping off the Old Man's beard.

Jenny Wren.—A head and beak for this character can be made up according to the instructions given in "The Mushroom Meadow." She may wear, in addition, a long cloak painted to represent a bird's back.

Amongst the necessary properties must be mentioned the snake skin, which may be cut of a long strip of coloured cloth some ten inches wide, as shown in Fig. 7. When Princess Silversilk is awaiting the arrival of King Uggermugger she should crouch with the skin wrapped round her, in such a way that upon arising to her feet it all falls to the ground in coils.

KING UGGERMUGGER

CHARACTERS.

KING UGGERMUGGER.

BLACAZINC, a rajah of Pooni-Woonia.

BLUE EYES, a lady of Waxidolli-land.

PRINCESS SILVERSILK.

THE OLD MAN OF THE CAVE.

JENNY WREN.

SCENE I.—*Park of Waxidoll Palace.*

Enter BLACAZINC and BLUE EYES, conversing.

Blacazinc. Good morning, Lady Blue Eyes. How beautiful and fresh you look this morning! It is a pleasure to see you, just after leaving his Majesty the King, too. He

is a hideous little monster, to be sure!

Blue Eyes. Ah, yes! But here he comes on his frightful little scrub of a horse.

Blacazinc. He seems in deep thought. Let us not disturb him.

Enter KING UGGERMUGGER on (or leading) his horse; he paces the stage for a minute in silence, and looks at himself in a hand-glass from time to time.

King Uggermugger. This is very distressing—*very!* What's the use, I should like to know, of being King of the Waxidollies and Maharajah of all the Pooni-Woonies if one can't be even decently good-looking? I'm sick of ugliness! I wish I were dead! I shall have *you* killed directly we get home, Dobbie, for *you're* ugly! Alas, I wish we were all dead together!!

Meanwhile, enter JENNY WREN, who overhears.

Jenny Wren. What a goose you are, King Uggermugger! I never saw such a muff in my life! Why don't you go and see the Old Man of the Cave?

King Uggermugger. Why don't I? Why should I?

Jenny Wren. Because you want to be pretty like me! (*Plumes herself.*) Because you'd like to be as handsome as the sun, and to have a wife as lovely as the moon, and a horse as beautiful as the stars!

King Uggermugger. Bless me! Well, now that you mention it, so I should! A steed as beautiful as

the stars—yes, I should like that certainly; a wife as lovely as the moon—yes, I think I should like that; and to be myself as handsome as the sun! Why, I should like that twenty times better than both put together! Oh, my dear Jenny Wren, tell me—only tell me—where is he? Where does the ancient party reside, that I may go and pay my respects to him at once?

Jenny Wren. Where you'll never find him, King Uggermugger! There, I think I have made myself presentable. Good morning. I am going to call upon my cousin, Robin Redbreast. Good morning. [*Exit.*]

King Uggermugger. Not find him? Won't I! Won't I! [*Exit.*]

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.—*Outside the OLD MAN'S Cave.*

OLD MAN *seated in background.*

Enter KING UGGERMUGGER, with DOBBIE.

King Uggermugger. Well, Dobbie, when do you expect to get to the cave? It is three months and one fortnight since we left home, and of all the dreary countries I ever saw this is the dreariest! Hoarfrost everywhere, covering the trees and the ground and the mountains. Not a *bit* of colour nor a *sound* of life! The birds don't sing nor the waters murmur, and even the lizards are dumb! They seem to have lost all their teeth hundreds of years ago, and their skins hang in loose folds on their huge bodies. Ah!

here we are at last! That must be the hermit!—"A short, crisp beard reaching down to his feet and a yard or two beyond," just suits the description! Good day, sir! Allow me to introduce myself as Uggermugger, King of Waxidolliland and Maharajah of Pooni-Woonia.

Old Man. The Old Man of the Cave. (*Bows exchanged.*) How d'y'e do! How d'y'e do! Very glad to see you, sir—*very* glad. We don't often get visitors here. I haven't had a visitor for some centuries, and I simply can't exist without society! How d'y'e do! I'm charmed to see you looking so well—not fatigued with your ride, I hope? Pretty creature that horse of yours, isn't he?

King Uggermugger. Thank you—no, not at all—yes, very, very beautiful creature indeed, as you say. And this is a sweet neighbourhood of yours too, for equestrian exercises—soft turf, green fields, singing birds, &c.—very lovely!

Old Man (wincing). Hum! it's not very often we have such handsome strangers as you to admire it.

King Uggermugger. Alas, you have already discovered that personal beauty is not my strong point!

Old Man. Well, to be candid, it *isn't*! You are the very ugliest man, without any exception, that I ever saw, and if I may be permitted to make the remark, you and your horse there seem pretty equally matched.

King Uggermugger (groans). I

admit the justice of your observation, and indeed it is with reference to this painful peculiarity that I have sought your powerful assistance. But if my beauty is small, my modesty is large; and all that I would beseech of you is, to tell me how I can get a steed as beautiful as the stars, a wife as lovely as the moon, and make myself as handsome as the sun.

Old Man. A modest request indeed! Don't you wish you may get it?

King Uggermugger (with pathos). Yes, I *do*!

Old Man (after a pause). Well, come; I'll make a bargain with you. If you'll feed my lizards for a month, I'll tell you!

King Uggermugger (slaps his thigh). Done! (*Correcting himself.*) Our Majesty agrees to the terms proposed for our royal acceptance.

Old Man (considering). Yes, I think you can do the work—if you *try*; but you will have to be careful. I have five hundred different sorts of lizards of different colours and sizes, and they all have their food done in different ways. The green-spotted-yellow ones eat nothing but soup made of a particular sort of lichen from the top of the mountain, fresh gathered every morning. The salmon-pink ones live upon rock-salt boiled hard; and you must take special care of the electric-blue one—the poor thing seems to be consumptive, and I have prescribed a diet for her of oil of ivy extracted from the re-

siduum of old bones. I will tell you the other recipes later on ; but mind, if by any chance you make the slightest mistake in your cookery, the lizards show their disgust by making the most horrible noises you ever heard.

King Uggermugger. Dear me ! dear me ! But faint heart never won fair lady, and handsome is as handsome does.

[*Exeunt.* OLD MAN *chuckling.*]

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.—*Park of Waxidoll Palace.*

BLACAZINC and BLUE EYES
talking together.

Blacazinc. His Majesty, King Uggermugger, has just returned from his travels, and he and his horse are as ugly, as ugly as ever they were !

Blue Eyes. Then His Royal Highness has failed in his search for the Old Man of the Cave ?

Blacazinc. It is rumoured that he saw the hermit and bargained to feed the Old Man's lizards for a month, after which he was to be told how to become handsome ; but why he has come back so ugly, I don't know !

Blue Eyes. See, here comes His Hideous Highness, so perhaps we may learn the reason.

Enter KING UGGERMUGGER.

Blacazinc and Blue Eyes (bowing). Welcome, your Monstrous Majesty !

Blue Eyes. We hope our King has been successful in his absence.

King Uggermugger. Successful,

lady ? Well, not altogether. You see, when the time came for that man of many hairs to fulfil his part of the bargain, he said, "Well, well ! all that you've got to do is to cut off the tail of the wild white horse with the golden hoofs, that can only be shot by the arrow with the diamond head ; and *that* you will *never* be able to find" ; and then he stroked his beard and chuckled and went back into his cave, slamming the door after him. So I don't seem to be much nearer my object than when I started. Do I ?

Blue Eyes. Alas, no, your Majesty ! Not if you cannot find the arrow !

Blacazinc. And I don't think I have ever seen a wild white horse with golden hoofs !

Blue Eyes. Nor I neither, with or without a tail !

King Uggermugger. I am not going to give in. Directly I reached my dominions, I offered a reward of £1000 to whomsoever would find the arrow with the diamond head, and the reward has since been increased to £2000, and again to £5000. But no one can find it !

[*Looks dolefully in hand-glass and sighs.*]

Blacazinc. Diamonds are not commonly used to make arrow-heads, your Majesty !

Blue Eyes. It really does not seem a very likely thing to find !

King Uggermugger. No ! It never will be found ! It's no good ; I'm as ugly as ever and so is Dobbie, and we never shall be otherwise ! Aren't we ugly ?

Blue Eyes. You're not very handsome, certainly, your Majesty!

King Uggermugger. I shall have to kill Dobbie. I can't stand him any longer.

Enter JENNY WREN, speaking to side-scenes.

Jenny Wren. Good morning, Master Sparrow; I am just going to call on my cousin, Robin Redbreast. Good morning, Mr. Woodpecker. Ah! King Uggermugger! Most potent and ill-favoured of monarchs, how are you? Looking a little pale after your travels, I think! So you're really still seeking for the arrow with the diamond head?

King Uggermugger. Exactly.

Jenny Wren. Aha! You'll never find it, though, for I am the only one who knows where it is!

King Uggermugger. Well, where is it then?

Jenny Wren. Ah, that's a secret; but if you'll promise solemnly never to take another wren's nest, nor allow any of your subjects to—perhaps—mind I only say *perhaps*—I'll tell you.

King Uggermugger (sighs). I'm particularly fond of wrens' eggs made into an omelette with nightingales' brains! (*With an effort, after looking into his glass.*) I promise solemnly upon my honour.

Jenny Wren. Well, you know that big tree behind the palace?

King Uggermugger, Blue Eyes, and Blacazinc (together). That one which is twenty times as big as any other?

Jenny Wren. Yes. Well, in the centre of that tree lies the wonderful diamond-headed arrow! I can see it perfectly, but it takes Jenny Wren's eyes to see that.

King Uggermugger. It is our pleasure that the tree be immediately felled. See to it.

[BLACAZINC *about to exit.*

Jenny Wren. Felled! Stay; how are you going to fell it?

Blacazinc. With an axe, of course!

Jenny Wren. But a particular tree like that can only be cut down with a particular axe made of a particular kind of steel.

King Uggermugger and Blacazinc. Oh!!

King Uggermugger. And where is the axe?

Jenny Wren. That is what I don't know.

King Uggermugger. Oh, then I wish I hadn't promised not to take wrens' eggs!

Jenny Wren. Stop a minute! There's an acquaintance of mine, a Mr. Owl——

King Uggermugger. Does he know where the axe is?

Jenny Wren. No; but he has a cousin, a Miss Weasel——

King Uggermugger. And Miss Weasel?

Jenny Wren. No, no; but she has an uncle, a Mr. Tom Cat——

King Uggermugger. Who knows all about it?

Jenny Wren. No, nothing at all; but Mr. Tom Cat is grand-step-father to a certain Master Dog——

King Uggermugger. Oh! run and fetch him quickly!

Jenny Wren. He could not tell you anything; but Master Dog is housekeeper to a wonderful man who makes choppers, and I think, that is, I have an idea that he may—mind I only say *may*—know where the axe is.

King Uggermugger. Blacazinc, run your fastest and demand the axe.

[BLACAZINC goes, and returns immediately with axe.

King Uggermugger. Joy and rapture sweet!

[Seizes axe and hurries away, followed by BLACAZINC.

Blue Eyes. It was fortunate, Miss Wren, that you could help us to the whereabouts of the arrow and the axe. I do hope the King will be able to beautify himself. He is really a most painful sight.

Enter BLACAZINC.

Blacazinc. The King has felled the tree with one mighty stroke, and comes bearing the wondrous arrow.

Enter KING with arrow.

Blue Eyes. How beautiful! The point is like a star, and the feathers shine like rubies!

King Uggermugger. And hidden right in the very heart of the oak, madam! Everything beautiful is out of sight in this country. (*Sighs, and looks in mirror.*) But now for the tail of the wild white horse with golden hoofs.

Jenny Wren. Remember about the eggs, by-the-bye!

King Uggermugger. Oh yes!

Blacazinc, from henceforth if any person shall take a wren's nest or egg, that person shall be tied up in a sack and thrown into the Bay of Biscay. Have this law made known throughout the country immediately. I can't stay! I'm off to find the horse! Gee up, Dobbie! Good-bye! [*Exit.*

Blacazinc and Blue Eyes. Farewell, your Majesty!

Jenny Wren. I'm going to see my cousin. I shall have very little time to call this morning! [*Exit.*

Blacazinc. No more wrens' eggs!

Blue Eyes. Why, every one will think the King's gone mad!

Blacazinc. What are we to have for breakfast, I wonder!

Blue Eyes. Nightingales' brains without wrens' eggs, I suppose!

[*Exeunt disconsolately.*

CURTAIN.

SCENE IV.—*Top of Inaccessible Mountain.*

Red Rattlesnake asleep in background. KING UGGERMUGGER and DOBBIE gasping and sprawling on the stage. JENNY WREN hopping round.

King Uggermugger (gasps). Oh dear! oh dear!

Jenny Wren. How have you been getting on, King Uggermugger?

King Uggermugger. Is that you, Jenny Wren?

Jenny Wren. Yes, your Majesty. How did you get here?

King Uggermugger. Dropped by the cocky-olly bird!! I and Dobbie

too! She came back again after they had frightened her away! I am the most unlucky man!

Jenny Wren. Who frightened her away? It's nearly two months now since you left home and you're not handsome yet. Do sit down awhile and tell me what you have been doing!

King Uggermugger. I'm sure I lost no time after I got the arrow. I soon found the horse. Wasn't it wonderful—white, with golden hoofs and a tail spread out behind him like a comet. I aimed; I shot it. It lay lifeless at my feet. I cut off its tail, but alas!—(*sighs, and looks in glass*)—it made no difference to me!! But Dobbie is much improved—tall, snow-white, glittering hoofs, magenta-coloured mane, and an expression of countenance the most engaging possible!

Jenny Wren. Of course you went back to the old magician! What did he say?

King Uggermugger. The old man stood so—(*stands at ease with a complacent smile*)—and said, "So you've come back again have you, my pretty friend! Pray, what brings you here now?" "My horse," said I—I had been reading *Henry IV.* "And what do you want?" said that wretched hermit. "Want?" said I. "Why, I want you to make me handsome, to be sure, as handsome as the sun, and to give me a wife as lovely as the moon, as you promised; that's what I want!" What's the use, I should like to know, of my having a horse with a magenta mane

and a tail like a comet, if I myself am as hideous as ever?

Jenny Wren. Why, the contrast only makes it worse. We shall hear the people calling out—"There goes his beautiful horse and ugly King Uggermugger!"

King Uggermugger (*with a sigh, and a look in his glass*). Yes! so said the Old Man. "Precisely," said he; "so you will, no doubt. Therefore the best thing you can do is to feed my lizards another month, and then—I'll tell you all about it." "Agreed," said I; "but none of your tricks this time, mind." "Well," said the Old Man, when the month was over, "I'll tell you just what you have to do. You must tickle the tail of the Red Rattlesnake on the Inaccessible Mountain, in the Undiscovered Islands, with a bristle from the left whisker of the Great Sea-serpent, and that is what I flatter myself you *won't* do in a hurry."

Jenny Wren. Was there ever such an unlucky man as you? To tickle the tail of a rattlesnake is bad enough at any time for a man of regular habits, but when that has to be done with a bristle from the nose of the Great Sea-serpent—of whose existence, by the way, I have considerable doubts—and on the top of an inaccessible mountain in an undiscovered island—why, it becomes serious!

King Uggermugger. Yes! But I went straight home and embarked as soon as possible, and in less than two days I found the Undiscovered

Island, with the Inaccessible Mountain in the middle of it.

Jenny Wren. You had not got the bristle of the Sea-serpent, had you?

King Uggermugger. No. Luckily, as we approached the island, I saw a cocky-olly bird pecking at something in the water, which we afterwards found to be the Great Sea-serpent; so I ordered the sailors to fire a cannon at the cocky-olly bird.

Jenny Wren. Did they kill it?

King Uggermugger. No. In their excitement they forgot to put any shot in. But it frightened the bird away, and the Sea-serpent was *very grateful!*

Jenny Wren. Was he? What did he say?

King Uggermugger. "King Uggermugger, you've saved my life, and I'm much obliged; if there is anything I can do for you—squeak!"

Jenny Wren. Dear me!

King Uggermugger. "Thank you kindly," said I; "and as you are so pressing, if you could spare me such a thing as a bristle out of your nose—I mean, out of your Majesty's left whisker—why, I confess it would be an accommodation!"

Jenny Wren. Just so!

King Uggermugger. "By all means," said he; "two if you like." So, you see, I have got the bristle. But where is the Red Rattlesnake?

Jenny Wren. I'll help you to find it! Why, there it is all the while, close behind you—(KING jumps)—and it's fast asleep.

King Uggermugger. It's a mercy

that the brute is fast asleep, or I should soon be tickling his palate instead of his tail. However, as I *am* here, I may as well try the effects of the bristle and have the satisfaction at least of *dying* handsome! (*Begins to tickle scientifically; snake begins to move; KING uses his hand-glass, but as PRINCESS SILVERSILK raises herself from the snake-skin he becomes enraptured.*) How beautiful! How fair!! How dazzlingly lovely!!!

Princess Silversilk (released, all but her feet). Just give me a lift out of this skin, will you? I have been here such a time that my feet are quite cramped! So, there we are!

King Uggermugger. What beautiful little feet, smaller than Cinderella's, and slippers of spun-glass brodered with diamonds! How lovely! And how detestably ugly I am. That old magician has done nothing to make me handsome. It's hateful—hateful; and oh, how I love you! Don't you think me dreadfully ugly, my Princess?

Princess Silversilk. Ye-es, r-rather; but never mind, you shall be my dear old papa.

King Uggermugger (dubiously). Your dear old papa!

Princess Silversilk. Yes, and then, you know, it won't signify how ugly you are!

King Uggermugger. Dear old papa!

Princess Silversilk. I am sure I shall be very fond of you in time—especially after all the trouble you've

given yourself on my account. But now let's get away from this place as fast as we can, for I expect the cocky-olly bird back every minute. She always lunches punctually at half-past one.

King Uggermugger. But how to do it?

Princess Silversilk. I'll soon show you! You can't suppose I've been here all these centuries for nothing! Just help me to tie these old snake-skins together into a rope and we'll slip down them in a jiffy!

King Uggermugger (as he helps to tie and carry them off the stage). Her dear old papa!! [Exeunt.

CURTAIN.

SCENE V.—*The Park of Waxidoll Palace.*

Enter KING UGGERMUGGER and BLACAZINC.

King Uggermugger. My lord, I entrust to you, as heretofore, the management of my kingdom. I am starting immediately for the Old Man of the Cave.

Blacazinc. So soon! Your Monstrous Majesty only came back yesterday, and you are starting again almost before daybreak?

King Uggermugger. Yes, at once. My steed is ready harnessed, and waiting for me to mount. Give this note to the Princess Silversilk, and take care that she has everything she wishes till I come again. And that may *never* be! Farewell, my lord! I fear I may *never* see you again! [Exit much moved.

Blacazinc (sobbing). Farewell, my generous and valiant Sovereign!

Enter PRINCESS SILVERSIK attended by BLUE EYES.

Princess Silversilk. Have you seen my dear old papa this morning, Lord Blacazinc?

Blacazinc. Alack, good lady, King Uggermugger has departed to find the Old Man of the Cave again, and asked me to give you this note.

[Hands the letter.

Princess Silversilk (reads the letter, and is much affected by it).

"Most Exquisite and Adorable of Princesses,—Do not be surprised at my departure: though I have had the good fortune to bring you back in safety from the top of the Inaccessible Mountain, and from the claws of the ferocious cocky-olly bird, I am miserable!—I confess it. The sight of your surpassing loveliness only makes my deformity more insupportable, and I am resolved to become good-looking or perish nobly in the attempt! Adieu! You will probably see me no more; but should you do so, it will be as your most devoted and *handsome* lover (not papa).—UGGERMUGGER."

Poor, poor Uggermugger! What shall I do without him! He *was* not *very* ugly, was he, Lady Blue Eyes?

Blue Eyes. I am afraid he was, Princess; and it always did trouble him so.

Princess Silversilk. Oh, I am sure I would not have minded if he had been as ugly, as ugly as—as—as—

as what, Lady! What could be uglier than he is?

Blue Eyes. Nothing, Princess!

Princess Silversilk. I'll live upon salt-fish and bread-crumbs until King Uggermugger comes back again. It is most improbable he will ever return, but I will eat nothing else for the rest of my life. Let us go indoors. Poor, dear Uggermugger! I won't call him "papa" any more, as he does not seem to like it! [Exeunt.

Enter KING UGGERMUGGER with his horse.

King Uggermugger (soliloquising). My preparations are all made, and now I start. (*Looking after the retreating figure of the PRINCESS.*) Farewell, sweet object of all my thoughts and vows! Never more shall thine eyes behold this hideous form! Oh, was there ever such a miserable wretch as I am! Here have I transformed a worn-out hack into a magnificent charger, and an old snake into a splendid princess, while I myself cannot change so much as the colour of an eyelash—except for the worse! (*Looks in hand-glass.*) I'm really frightful; I know it! But I'll be revenged on the old hypocritical Bluebeard yet. Come up, Dobbie! The next time we come home they shall not cry, "There goes his beautiful horse and ugly King Uggermugger!"

[UGGERMUGGER ties his hand-glass to DOBBIE'S saddle and is about to depart, when the OLD MAN of the Cave

enters from the opposite side.

UGGERMUGGER hides behind a shrub and listens.

Old Man (soliloquising). If it is true that Uggermugger has returned with Princess Silversilk, it is certainly safer for me not to remain at home. What a state of mind he will be in—uglier than ever! (*Chuckles.*) He is sure to want to see me again. But he won't, though. Not if I know it! (*Chuckles.*) When I have reached the other side of Pooni-Woonia, I know of a snug little den where no one will find me—no one! But I am sadly afraid I've lost my way! Above all things, I must avoid getting too near the Waxidoll Palace! If King Uggermugger happened to hear I was in the neighbourhood—

King Uggermugger. Can I believe my eyes! What excellent luck!! (*Seizes OLD MAN by the beard and flourishes sword.*) By all the lizards in existence, I vow I'll cut off your head *instantly* if you don't tell me *on the spot* how to become the handsomest man in the world!!!

Old Man. Oh dear! I thought it was a mad shark! What a frightful situation! Have mercy upon an old man, most beautiful youth, and I will tell you everything!

King Uggermugger. Well, be quick then, or it will be the worse for you!

Old Man (groans). Yes, yes, I will—I will! You must first catch the one-eyed Daddy-long-legs with—

King Uggermugger. Oh, you're at

your old tricks again, are you—then off goes your head! (*Flourishes sword.*) Now then—one—two—three; when I say “four,” off it goes—f——

Old Man (screams). Oh stop, stop! (*Wrings his hands.*) I will tell you—I promise solemnly I will; but oh, it's agonising! The truth is that—that—in fact, that you must *cut off my beard!*!

King Uggermugger (cuts off beard and feels for his hand-glass). Where's my hand-glass, Dobbie. Dobbie, stop! Whoa up!!

[*Goes out after DOBBIE.* OLD MAN *tries in vain to catch his beard and stick it on again.*

Enter PRINCESS SILVERSILK attended by BLUE EYES and BLACAZINC.

Princess Silversilk (amazed). What can this old man be doing here?

Old Man. Oh, my beard! my beard! Oh, agony, my beard!

Princess Silversilk. What is the matter? Try and help him, Blacazinc.

[*Turns, and is still more astonished to see UGGERMUGGER re-enter beautified, holding his hand-glass and leading DOBBIE with one hand, flourishing his sword with the other, and crying out jubilantly.*

King Uggermugger.

“If at first you don't succeed,

Try, try, try again!”

[*SILVERSILK turns to meet UGGERMUGGER with delight.*

Princess Silversilk. Darling Ugger-

mugger, how handsome you are! So noble! so lordly! Every movement grace and beauty itself!!!

King Uggermugger (much pleased with himself). I am glad you think so too, my beautiful Princess.

Princess Silversilk. I am so glad you have come back. I'm getting dreadfully tired of salt-fish and bread-crumbs! I was so sorry to lose you, I vowed I would eat nothing else but salt-fish and bread-crumbs till you came back. We've just had that for breakfast.

King Uggermugger. That was devoted of you! And you won't call me papa any more now, will you? But you will marry me and be my Queen!

Princess Silversilk. Yes, I am sure I loved you from the very first moment I saw you—if not sooner!

King Uggermugger. Then I think we could be married to-morrow; don't you? We will have such rejoicings! What do you say to this? Rivers running with spontaneous port wine, and fountains automatically spouting champagne!

Princess Silversilk. Lovely!!

King Uggermugger. Showers of sugar-plums, to be followed without intermission by hailstorms of French chocolate-drops!

Princess Silversilk. How nice!!

King Uggermugger. Omelettes of wrens' eggs and nightingales' brains!

Jenny Wren. No, no, King Uggermugger!

King Uggermugger. Oh yes, I

remember ; there won't be any omelettes, but instead there shall be one hundred thousand wedding cakes struck off in the royal mint and presented gratis to our enraptured citizens !

Blacazinc and Blue Eyes. How good !!

King Uggermugger. Yes, and you shall dance a whole week for joy without stopping, and shout till you are black in the face—"Long life to handsome King Uggermugger and his beautiful Princess."

Blue Eyes and Blacazinc. How jolly !!

Jenny Wren. May I be married at the same time, Princess ?

Princess Silversilk. Yes, if you like, Jenny Wren ; and you too, Sir Blacazinc ! But what are you going to do with that wretched old man, Uggermugger dear ?

[OLD MAN, *who has been groaning and writhing about the stage all the time, now breaks out with—*

Old Man. Oh, my beard ! my beard ! Oh, agony, my beard !!

King Uggermugger. Oh, give him a new beard and send him back to mind his lizards again. We can't have him here spoiling all the fun. Come, moon-like Silversilk !

[BLUE EYES *immediately produces a false beard and fixes it on the OLD MAN, who at first accepts it with disapproval, but after having looked at himself in UGGERMUGGER'S hand-glass, becomes gradually well-pleased. Meanwhile, KING UGGERMUGGER and PRINCESS SILVERSILK walk round and exeunt.*

Blue Eyes, Blacazinc, and Jenny Wren (shout). Long life to handsome King Uggermugger and his beautiful Princess ! [Exeunt.

CURTAIN.

COURAGE

By KATE HARVEY

THE simple interior of a Dutch kitchen in which "Courage" is played should be made in the usual manner with flats, the general disposition of the stage being shown in Fig. 1, a careful examination of which will enable the stage-manager to arrange the scenery.

The first flat on the right contains a practicable door, through which the char-

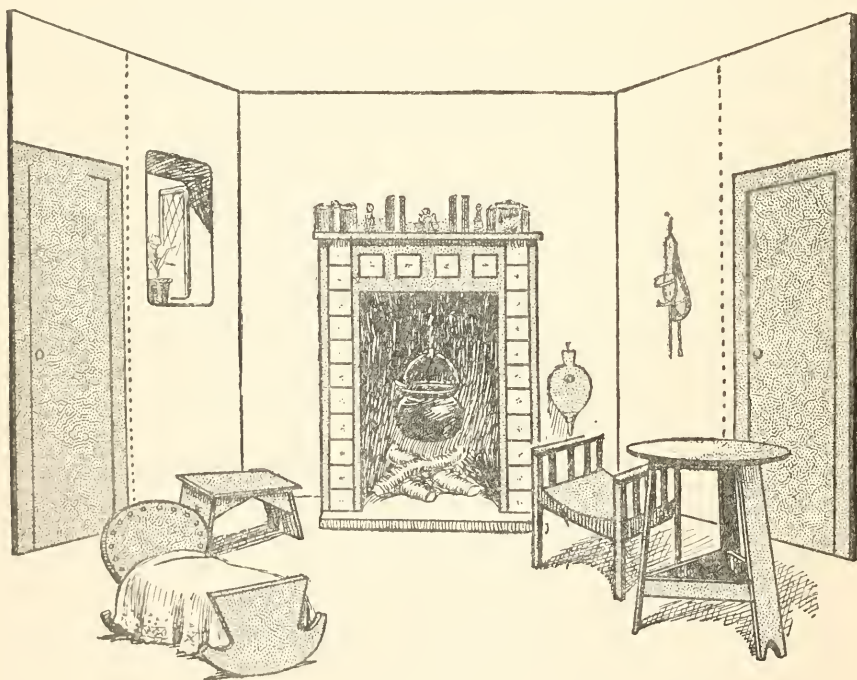


FIG. 1

acters enter from outside. (It must, of course, always be borne in mind that right and left in stage directions presume the reader to be standing with his face to the audience.) In the next flat is a lattice window, upon the sill of which are flower-pots containing a few bulbs. The large flat in the centre should have a fireplace with a mantelpiece, on which are various bright tins and candlesticks. The next is plain, whilst the remaining flat contains another door. The whole

floor of the stage should be covered with oilcloth, to represent black and white tiling, whilst the cradle, chairs, and table should be disposed in the manner shown.

COSTUMES

All the costumes in this play are those of typical Dutch peasants.

Jan, the husband, should wear a plain cotton shirt and large baggy breeches, as depicted in Fig. 2. These should be made of sateen, or some similar material of a dark colour, gathered round the waist into a band, and ornamented with two



FIG. 2



FIG. 3



FIG. 4

large studs. On his feet he should wear wooden sabots, whilst upon his head is a large peaked cap, adapted from an ordinary sailor's cap by placing a cardboard band round the crown and covering the whole with black material. A spotted handkerchief knotted round the neck will complete the costume.

Josef and Hendrick should be dressed in the same fashion, except that the former, who must have a long white beard and hair, should wear a large cloak reaching to his heels.

The Mother.—A very effective costume for the mother is shown in Fig. 3. A white bodice with sleeves reaching to the elbow should be worn under a red sleeveless garment ornamented with white embroidery on the front. The skirt, over which she wears an apron, should be made rather full, white at the top, but joined to a blue material reaching to the feet. The hair must be plaited in long

tails and tied with white bows; her head being covered with a large peasant cap with wings, as shown in the diagram.

Franz is dressed in a similar fashion to his father, except that his breeches should be of a light colour, whilst in place of the cotton shirt he may wear a dark coat ornamented with two rows of large metal buttons.

Greta.—The only way in which *Greta*, Fig. 4, differs in costume from her mother is that she has a coloured bodice with a V-shaped opening, and pointed white cap with insertion.

A fairly large doll, suitably dressed, should be placed in the cradle to represent the baby.

COURAGE

CHARACTERS.

THE MOTHER.

JAN, *the father*.

JOSEF.

HENDRICK.

FRANZ, *a boy*.

GRETA, *a girl*.

SCENE.—*A Dutch kitchen. Red and white tiled floor. An open Dutch grate with a log fire. A steaming pot with a large spoon in it hangs over the fire. Table, L., with medicine bottle, spoon, and cup, and a muffler on it. Baby in cradle, R. Small Dutch chair, L. F. JAN, L., in large Dutch chair, smoking a pipe and reading a paper. Rocking-chair, R. MOTHER stirs the pot over the fire. Silence for a few seconds while JAN turns his paper.*

Jan. How smart thou art this evening, little mother. What's the reason?

Mother. I thought it would please the children; it seems to make a little festival of their home-coming.

Jan. Bless my soul, I had quite forgotten!

Mother. Jan, how *couldst* thou! But there, it's so *very* like a man.

Jan. My dear, a man has many things to think of.

Mother. And a woman?

Jan (*finally*). Has just her house.

Mother. And!! — (*laughing*) — O Jan, Jan, thou art as ignorant as the rest of them!

Jan (*surprised*). Ignorant! Who's ignorant?

Mother (*goes behind his chair and kisses the top of his head*). Thou art, dear old man!

Jan. Well, that's funny! I've always thought myself rather sharp—(*winks solemnly*)—for a Dutchman!

Mother. So thou art—(*peeps round into his face*)—for a man!!

Jan (*puts his arm round her and pulls her down beside him*). I am sharp enough to see how young and pretty thou dost look to-night!

Mother. Don't be silly, Jan; remember I'm the mother of two *big* children, as well as "baby."

Jan. And the "children" are

coming home, and "baby" is better, so thou art very happy.

Mother. Yes, *very.* (*Suddenly her face changes and she looks up at him sorrowfully.*) Jan, baby was so ill this morning I thought we should lose her.

Jan (*pats her lovingly*). Poor little woman!

Mother. Come and look at her. (*They rise, cross R., and kneel beside the cradle.*) The doctor was so kind, he stayed until the worst had passed; then gave her a dose that made her sleep for hours. He says she will get well quite quickly now, if I am careful. (*Caressingly.*) My little one, if *care* can cure thee, thou wilt soon be well! (*Looks up at JAN.*) I dare not leave her for a moment. At the slightest sign of a relapse I must give the medicine he left, at once. [*They both rise.*]

Jan. I wish thou hadst a neighbour. I cannot bear to leave thee with no one near to help, in case of need.

Mother (*brightly*). I don't mind, and the children thrive so much better in the country. I wonder how they look. Fancy, they have been away two months! It was good of Menela to keep them so long. They should be here directly.

Jan (*takes out his watch*). Hullo! it's later than I thought. I must be off!

Mother (*in dismay*). Off? Where?

Jan (*looks rather uncomfortable*). I have to take Toon's place. He has been working since early morning.

Mother. Thou didst not tell me!

(*Grips his arm.*) Thou art going to work upon a dyke to-night?

Jan. Yes.

Mother. Where?

Jan. At Kappel.

Mother. Which slope?

Jan. The sea-slope.

Mother. Why, oh why didst thou not tell me? Can't some one go instead?

Jan. Little mother, wouldst thou have a coward for thy children's father? It is our heritage, this fight against the sea. (*Takes her face lovingly between his hands.*) To-night thou need'st not fear, the breach is nearly mended and there is no longer any danger, tho' many hours of work are needed yet to finish it, and Toon is tired out; he must have rest.

Mother (*faintly*). Thou shouldst have told me. Thou knowest I always dread thee working there at night.

Jan. Because I knew, I did not tell thee; I hoped to save thee hours of needless worry. (*MOTHER sobs.*) Why, what's the matter? Thou art usually so brave; it is not like thee to give way in this fashion.

Mother. I know, but baby was so ill, and—and—(*throwing herself into his arms*)—I love thee so.

Jan (*puts his arms round her*). Thou art unstrung. Thou wilt feel better soon, when the children come.

Mother (*looks up, and smiles bravely*). Yes, I know; but now, what about thy food?

Jan. That's all right. Toon's wife

knew that baby was ill, so she promised to send enough for both. I must be off. I should be there at half-past six, and shall only just have time. Good-bye, little mother.

Mother. Good-bye. (*They kiss lovingly; JAN goes out, and the MOTHER runs to window and waves farewell.*) Take care of thyself, Jan.

Jan (in the distance). All right, mother! Don't worry.

Mother (shudders). How I always dread his working on the dykes! (*Closes window.*) And to-night looks so stormy! (*Baby cries; MOTHER carries it to rocking-chair, R. of fireplace.*) Hush, hush, my darling! do not fret; sister and brother will soon be here, and thou must have a peaceful face for them to see. Hush—(*rocks*)—hush—(*rocks*)—let thy tired eyelids close. (*Rocks gently.*) Sleep, my loved one, sleep. [*Sings.*

LULLABY.

Hush! Sleep steals softly by
And drops her poppy balm.

Sleep, little one, nor fear,

For I am near!

Rest, rest thee! safe and calm.

Then sleep!

The while

I keep

Close by,

To shield

From ill.

Now yield,

My babe,

And close

Soft lids.

Repose,

Dear heart!

Sleep, sleep, my loved one, s-l-e-e-p!

[*She rocks for some seconds; then, when the baby has fallen asleep, puts it in its cradle. While she is gently rocking it the door opens quietly.* FRANZ (*aged eight*) and GRETA (*aged five*) enter, breathless and full of merriment. FRANZ puts a warning finger to his lips, and shuts the door noiselessly. He takes off his cap and hangs it on a peg, and they are going to take off their sabots so as to surprise their MOTHER, when FRANZ slips and makes a noise. The MOTHER turns round quickly, rises, and runs to them.

Mother. My darlings!

Franz and Greta (running towards her). Mother, mother, show us what the stork has brought!

[*They kiss her affectionately.*

Franz (unrolling his muffler). We were in such a hurry we could not wait for uncle to bring us from the station. We rushed all the way. Oh, I nearly forgot! He said, as he was not going to bring us home he would wait to see thee till the morning, because he has so much to do, and must get back to Dort to-morrow.

[*Puts his muffler on the table.*

Greta. Now, mother, show us—quick!

Mother (holds up a warning finger). Quiet, dears; 'tis a lovely baby sister. She has been very ill and cannot always rest; now she is sleeping peacefully, so do not wake her.

Come, tread softly, and have a peep at her !

[*They all tiptoe gently to the cradle. The MOTHER stoops down and draws back the coverlet. GRETA kneels on opposite side, and bends over the baby to see it better. FRANZ stands a little way off, looking on in a "superior" fashion.*

Greta. O mother, *what* a darling ! Look at her *tiny* hand ! (*In hushed tones.*) Is it *real* ?

Mother. Put thy finger very gently in it, and thou wilt feel how warm and soft it is.

Greta. The darling ; she is holding it so tight.

Mother (*turning to FRANZ, who is still silent*). Well, my son, art thou not satisfied ?

Franz (*standing with his hands in his pockets, and his legs wide apart*). Really, mother, there seems so little to be satisfied about.

Mother (*laughs*). Thou wilt not complain that she is too small when thou art obliged to carry her. (*Takes GRETA'S hand.*) Come, take off thy cloak and tell me about thy visit to Aunt Menela. But first let me have a look at thee ; it is such a time since I have seen thee. (*Stands GRETA in front of her.*) I do believe thou hast grown—(*looks round to FRANZ*)—and Franz too !

[*Takes off GRETA'S bonnet and cloak and lays them in the chest ; then puts on her little cap. FRANZ takes his muffler and hangs it on the*

same peg as his cap ; then comes over to his MOTHER and looks at her admiringly.

Franz. How pretty thou art to-night, mother ! (*Surprised.*) Is it Kermis ?

Mother. Nay, dear heart. But (*laughing*) is it not *my* Kermis when my darlings come back to me ?

Franz. Thou hast put on all those pretty things for us ? It was *jolly* of thee, mother !

Mother (*lays her hand affectionately across his shoulders, and smiles at him*). Now come to the fire and have a warm, and tell me about thy visit.

[*MOTHER sits in rocking-chair ;*

GRETA brings her stool close to her knee, while FRANZ flings himself on the rug before the fire.

(*To FRANZ.*) Hast thou enjoyed thyself ?

Franz. We had a splendid time. Hans has taught me *lots* of fancy skating. He can do all kinds of clever things.

Mother. And Greta ?

Greta. I can do outside edge now ; so Hans can teach *me* when I go to Dort again.

Mother (*playfully*). And how about the knitting ? [FRANZ *grins*.

Greta (*hangs her head*). I—I didn't do much, mother.

Mother (*pats her head*). Ah well ! thou hast had a good time, and art come back looking bonny and rosy. (*Turns to FRANZ.*) Are all the cousins well ?

Franz. Yes, mother, and as *jolly* as ever. (*Doubtfully.*) Well, perhaps

not Lysbeth — (*wisely*) — being betrothed alters a girl, I suppose.

Mother (laughs, and points a finger at him). The truth, the *truth*, young man! She has not so much time to devote to little troublesome boys! She must have a great deal to do now, and is more busy than ever, I expect.

Greta. I should rather think she *was*, and she is *quite* grown up. All her pretty hair has gone.

Mother (looking slightly scared). Gone!

Franz. The little silly means that cousin has put her hair inside her cap.

Greta. I'm not silly! *cousin* is for hiding it. I think it looks much prettier like mother's.

Franz. So do I; but then mother's cap is different, too. Dost thou know Rudolph, mother?

Mother. Yes, quite well; and like him very much. Lysbeth is a lucky girl. She must be very happy.

Franz. I don't know about *that*. She's not half as *useful* as she was. (*In compassionate voice.*) I *hope* Rudolph won't be disappointed.

Mother (with a twinkle in her eye). I am sorry *thou* art not satisfied! What is wrong?

Franz (confidentially). Well! a fellow likes a girl to have time to run races with him, or sew the sails of his boat, or—or—in fact, do *anything* he wants.

Mother. It seemed to me, when last I saw her, that Lysbeth was always ready to help. (*The twinkle appears again.*) I hope she has not grown selfish.

Franz. Oh, she's well enough;

but she never has any time now. She is always going out to *buy* something, or staying at home to make something, or she must learn a song to sing to Rudolph, or do some other stupid, useless thing, *just* when her help is wanted badly. (*Sighs.*) It's a great pity!

Mother. I wonder if she is as much like ancestress Clara Santvoort as ever.

Franz (eagerly). Yes, *quite*. I know, because I saw the picture of her; *she* was *lovely*. Lysbeth will never be *half* as pretty. I thought I had better tell her so, because Rudolph stuffs her up with no end of rubbish about her blue eyes and golden hair.

Mother (moving her head from side to side, and trying to look solemn). Dear, dear, *does* he now?

Franz. Oh, it's perfectly ridiculous! but never mind Lysbeth. Mother, tell us how great-great-grandmother Clara saved Dort from the Spanish soldiers. Aunt Menela said you knew all about it.

Greta. Yes, do, mother darling.

Mother. Very well. (*To GRETA.*) But look at baby first.

Greta (goes over to cradle). She is fast asleep, mother.

[*Stoops, and kisses the baby's hand.*]

Mother. That's all right; come here—(*points to stool*)—and while I knit I will tell the story.

[*FRANZ gets her knitting; then GRETA and he settle themselves on their stools. GRETA holds a skein of wool, which the MOTHER winds.*]

Franz. Didn't great-great-grand-mother live at Dort, mother ?

Mother. Not *in* the town, just a little way out, with a farmer. One evening, on her way to milk the cows, she saw some Spanish soldiers hiding behind the hedges.

Greta (*looking scared*). I should have screamed !

Mother. She was too brave to do that ; she walked on quietly, singing, just as usual.

Franz. She *was* plucky ! (*Shudders.*) And they were Spanish soldiers, too !

Greta. Why does Franz say that, mother ?

Mother. Because whenever the Spaniards had the chance they were so terribly cruel to the Dutch people.

Greta. Did she *really* milk the cows ?

Mother. Yes, and when she had finished she walked back again without hurrying in the least, so that the soldiers might not suspect that she had seen them.

Franz. How glad she must have been when she got home !

Mother. Yes ; indeed, she told her master what she had seen as quickly as she could, and he took her at once to the Burgomaster of Dort.

Greta. I wonder if she was afraid of him. Burgomaster Van Dyck looks so very stern when he has on all his grand robes.

Franz (*in superior tone*). He wouldn't be dressed up to see a milkmaid ; besides, he didn't know she was coming.

Mother. I fancy she was too

anxious to tell her news, to feel afraid of *anybody*.

Franz. What did the Burgomaster do, mother ?

Mother. He sent out a spy at once, who saw that the girl was right. So they set to work as quickly as they could to guard the town.

Franz. How ?

Mother. They brought some soldiers into it secretly, and opened a sluice.

Greta. Whatever for, mother ?

Mother. To lay the country under water.

Greta (*in astonishment*). But we are always trying to keep it out !

Mother. Yes, my child—(*sighs*)—and it is an untiring enemy that never gives us any rest.

Franz. It was not our enemy then, mother !

Mother. No ; at times like that it is our greatest friend.

Greta. Did it not drown the soldiers ?

Mother. Yes ; most of them.

Franz. And the farmer's land must have been ruined !

Mother. Yes, and so were his crops, and so many of his cattle were destroyed that the people of Dort gave him a handsome sum of money.

Franz (*indignantly*). Didn't they give the milkmaid anything ?

Mother. I don't know about that, but they were so proud of her bravery they engraved a picture of her, milking a cow, on their money.

[*Breaks off wool and rolls up remainder of skein.*]

Greta (softly). And she was our great-great-grandmother.

Franz. She must have been a real brave woman. (*Earnestly.*) I am glad she "belongs" to us.

Greta. I wish I could be like that—(*rises*)—and do some noble deed.

Mother (puts her arm round her). Love father, mother, brother, and sister with all thy little heart, my darling; then thou wilt be ready when the time comes to do brave deeds for them. Baby is restless; I will nurse her for a little.

[*Rises, and puts down her knitting. As she does so a merry tune is heard outside; GRETA and FRANZ involuntarily begin to mark time to it.*]

Franz (excitedly). Greta, Greta, it's our dance! (*Rushes to the window and flings it open.*) Why, if there isn't old Josef Hals with his fiddle! (*Waves his hand excitedly.*) Hullo, Josef! Hullo!

Josef. Hullo! so thou art home again?

Franz. Yes; we've just arrived.

Greta (dances up to Franz). Franz, do let us dance to mother now, while Josef is here!

Franz. Mother, may we? (*Pops his head out of window.*) Wait a minute, Josef. (*Runs over to MOTHER.*) Cousin Lysbeth taught us a dance, and we want thee to see how pretty it is. Baby is awake; it won't hurt her?

Mother. No, I don't think so, and I shall love to see the dance; it will warm thee too before thou

goest out. I have an errand for thee in the village. Ask Josef if he can spare the time.

Franz (runs back to window). Mother says, canst thou stop and play for us? We want to dance.

Josef (appears outside window). Yes, of course I can, to make a little fête of thy return!

Franz (impetuously). Then come along, this very minute!

[*Bangs the window, and goes to the door to open it for JOSEF, who comes in, pulls off his cap, and bows to MOTHER.*]

Josef. Good evening, Vrouw.

[*Puts his fiddle in corner, and blows on his cold hands.*]

Mother. Good evening. It is very kind of thee to take so much trouble for us, Josef. Come to the fire and warm thyself.

Josef (bows). No trouble, Vrouw; a pleasure, a great pleasure. (*Bows, comes to fire, and holds his hands out to the blaze.*) Ah, this is nice!

[*MOTHER takes the baby out of the cradle and seats herself in small chair, L. F. GRETA follows her every movement.*]

Franz. Play the tune we heard just now, Josef; Greta and I can dance to it; and—(*puts up a warning finger*)—mind thou dost not play too fast—(*laughs*)—in case we have to think of what comes next!

Josef. Allright, little master. Bring me my fiddle and I'll tune up.

[*FRANZ gives him his fiddle; then he and GRETA run to their places.*]

DUTCH DANCE.

[MOTHER *smiles and nods her head, and makes byplay with the baby. At the end she claps her hands.*

Mother. Bravo! well done! That is very pretty. You must dance it again to-morrow for father—that is to say, if Josef can come in for a few minutes, when he is passing.

Franz (*eagerly*). Canst thou, Josef?

Josef. I think so, in the evening, about this time.

[MOTHER *puts baby in cradle and goes to the cupboard.*

Greta (*shyly taking JOSEF'S hand*). Wilt thou come and see our new baby sister, Josef?

Josef (*in pretended surprise*). A baby sister!! Thou dost not say so! How proud thou must be!

Greta. Of course we are! She's such a darling! (*Takes JOSEF to cradle.*) Look! hasn't she lovely eyes?

Josef. Yes; just like the Vrouw's.

Franz (*bends down and touches the baby's face with his finger*). Look, she's smiling! I say, she's got hold of my finger, and isn't she sucking it a good one.

[GRETA *plays with the baby's rattle.*

Josef (*doubtfully*). Hadst thou not better take it out?

Franz (*airily*). Oh, I don't mind; it was dirty—train, you know. (*Suddenly.*) Yes, no. What a lark! (*Considers.*) Positively—she hasn't—

Josef (*anxiously*). Hasn't what?

Franz (*stands up*). A single tooth

in her head, and it doesn't look as if she'd any hair worth mentioning. (*Bends over the cradle critically.*) She's dreadfully unfinished, but she's not a bad sort either. I believe she'd be quite decent if she had plenty of teeth and two long pig-tails!

Greta (*jumps up and stamps indignantly*). Thou canst keep thy old teeth and pig-tails; she's just lovely!

Franz (*superciliously*). And what does a little chit like thee know about it?

Greta (*indignantly bobbing her head in front of him*). More than thou dost, because I know she's simply perfect. (*Flings herself down by the cot and caresses the baby.*) The darling!

[*She continues rocking and amusing the baby.*

Mother (*looks round*). Children, quarrelling already—bad ways must be mended. Baby sister will soon understand what is said. (*Comes forward with a bottle of Schnapps, a jug of water, and a glass on a tray.*) Come, Josef; thou hast to drink baby's health.

Josef. That will I, right gladly. (*MOTHER pours out a glass and hands it to him; he raises it.*) Here's to her speedy recovery!

[*Bows to MOTHER and drinks.*

Wind is heard, not too loudly.

Mother (*looks round apprehensively*). Dost thou think we shall have a rough night?

Josef (*uneasily*). It looks rather like it now, but it may pass over.

Mother (*nervously*). Jan—is on the dyke at Kappel.

Josef. Yes, I know; but do not feel anxious, it is quite safe now.

Mother. Yes, yes, but—(smiles sadly)—the sea is always with us; it never sleeps or tires. (Sighs.) Dutch-women bear a heavy burden.

Josef. Thou art right. *Our* burden is heavy enough, God knows, but the *women's* is far heavier. (Pause.) Well, well, I must be off; it's getting late.

[Takes up his fiddle. MOTHER goes to cupboard and brings out a pair of skates.

Mother. Franz, thou must take these to the village to have them ground. Tell Hans to be sure and do them at once, as father will want them to-morrow.

Franz. All right! (Takes the skates, flings them over his shoulder, kisses his MOTHER, gets down his muffler and cap and puts them on.) Good-bye, pretty mums; I'll be as quick as I can. Come along, Josef; we can go together.

Josef. Good evening, Vrouw.

Mother. Good evening, Josef.

Greta (runs up to JOSEF). Good night, Josef.

Josef (kisses her). Good night, little missie.

Franz (opens door, JOSEF and FRANZ go out; FRANZ pops his head back). I'll race the storm.

[Slams the door. GRETA rocks the cradle. MOTHER attends to pot over fire; then gets out a leather and starts polishing an already brilliant copper saucepan which she takes off the dresser.

Greta. What name art thou going to give baby, mother?

Mother. I don't know. (Rubs hard.) We have thought of many—(rubs)—but have not found one yet—(rubs)—that we really like.

Greta (nodding her head wisely). I know what I should call her if she was my little baby.

Mother (laughing). What?

Greta. Clara. P'raps she'd be as brave as great-great-grandmother.

Mother. Bless the child! It seems as if thou canst not forget her. Didst thou see her picture?

Greta. Yes; and all the pretty things Aunt Menela has in her coloured chests. (Gets up and runs to MOTHER.) She gave me a lovely cap; I will show it to thee when the luggage comes.

Mother. She has beautiful things—(sighs enviously)—I know. I wish I had a— (A sudden flash of light. She drops leather, and clutches hold of the dresser.) What—what is that?

[GRETA runs to the window, opens it, and looks out.

Greta. Such a pretty light keeps flashing, mother.

[MOTHER goes to window and pulls her hastily away.

Mother. "Pretty!" Child, it means death! A dyke— (Another flash.) Ah, there it is again! It must be urgent.

Greta (scared). Mother, what is the matter?

Mother. The water, the cruel water is bursting through a dyke; that light is telling of the danger, and

every man must go as quickly as he can to help. Father will— (*Horror-struck she clutches the window-frame; GRETA sinks on the floor and buries her head in her hands.*) My Jan!—(*gasps*)—he cannot see the signal. The water—(*the horror grows in her face*)—if they cannot stop it soon—(*puts her hand to her throat*)—he will be—(*chokes*)—I cannot say it. Jan, Jan, I must warn thee! I'll go at— (*Baby cries; MOTHER looks round in dazed way.*) What's that? (*Baby cries again.*) My babe, my babe! (*She runs to cradle to hush the child.*) The doctor said—(*bewildered.*) What did he say—what did he *insist* upon! (*Distraughtly tries to think.*) Ah, now I know—"As you value her frail life, never leave her side one second, until I come again." (*Rises, walks to a chair and sinks on to it, wringing her hands.*) What shall I do? I cannot leave my Jan to perish; there's no one near.

[*Wind heard screaming round the house. It frightens GRETA, who rises half-crying; runs over to her MOTHER, and flings herself upon her knees by her MOTHER's lap.*

Greta. Mother, mother!

[*MOTHER looks down at the child and starts. GRETA buries her head in her MOTHER's skirts.*

Mother. I cannot—a little timid child—black darkness—rough wind—perhaps the cruel water—(*catches her breath*)—a little fragile child—'tis wicked. But, Jan—I must—she must.

(*Flinches as another flash comes.*) It must be done at once. (*Puts out her hand in strange, unnatural way, and lifts the child's head, and speaks as though her tongue were refusing to work.*) Greta, my darling, father works upon a dyke at Kappel to-night.

Greta. Yes, mother.

Mother. Thou knowest the way?

Greta. Why, mother, quite well!

Mother (*tries to steady her voice*). Canst thou take— (*Turns away.*) I cannot—I cannot! (*Looking up.*) Dear God, I pray Thee make me—(*sobs; looks at GRETA*)—make us brave, for Jan's dear sake. (*Calmer.*) My darling, canst thou take a message to him?

Greta (*rises in dismay*). To-night, mother; in the dark?

Mother (*tries to smile*). "To-night," "in the dark." (*The wind howls, and the MOTHER shrinks.*) Listen! Father is in great danger; he must be told.

Greta (*wildly*). Mother, I cannot go.

Mother. It is not far.

Greta (*wails*). But it's so dark.

Mother. Thou shalt have the lantern.

Greta. It's so lonely.

Mother (*quietly*). My child, thou hast to go.

Greta (*sobbing*). Mother, mother, don't send me—please don't send me. I—I'm frightened.

[*Flings herself sobbing on her MOTHER's shoulder.*

Mother (*in an agony clasps the child in her arms, and speaks with the*

calmness of despair.) To-night, when I was telling thee the story of great-great Grandmother, thou wishedst thou couldst also do brave deeds, and now—*(choking back her sobs)*—and now—*(GRETA looks up)*—thy chance has come.

[GRETA drops her head on her MOTHER'S shoulder, and sobs.]

Mother (very quietly). Was it only talk, and wilt thou fail me when I need thy help so sorely?

[GRETA'S arms steal round the MOTHER'S neck, and they both remain quite still for a few seconds; then GRETA suddenly raises her head and looks her MOTHER steadily in the face.]

Greta. Give me the lantern, mother—and my cloak; quick, *quick*, before my courage fails.

[With shaking hand the MOTHER lights the lantern, while GRETA runs to chest, gets out cloak and hood, and brings them for her MOTHER to help her put them on.]

Mother. Run fast to father. Tell him this—A dyke has burst; come quickly. Repeat the message, child.

Greta (mechanically). A dyke has burst; come quickly.

Mother. Good-bye, sweetheart. God be with thee! *(She kisses her softly, opens the door, puts the lantern in her hand and watches her away; then closes it, and with her hand still on the handle sinks down in utter despair; pause; with a choking sob she looks up.)* Greta, my brave,

brave girl, how *could* I send thee thus to darkness and to danger? *(Springs up.)* I was *mad*. Where is my cloak? *(Hunts for it.)* I will follow, send her back, and go myself for Jan. *(Baby cries; she runs to cradle and rocks it.)* No, no, I must not leave thee, so fragile as thou art. *(Baby cries again.)* Hush, hush, dear one! Didst thou think that I had gone? *(Turns child and gently pats it to rest.)* I will not leave thee—*(rises)*—but oh, my Greta, my sweet flower, what have I done? Yet—there is Jan—*(sobs)*—I *could* not let him die; do *naught* to save him. *(Goes to window, strains her eyes into darkness and stretches out her arms.)* Jan, my brave, strong Jan, come back to me! *(Clasps her hands.)* Father of all, watch over him, and bring him safe to home.

[Sinks to ground, pause; then some one knocks at the door; as the knocks increase in violence she looks round in a dazed fashion. The door bursts open and HENDRICK is blown in. He has sprained his wrist, so closes and fastens the latch with great difficulty. The MOTHER struggles to her feet.]

Hendrick. We want Jan.

Mother (dazed). Jan?

Hendrick (impatiently). Yes; nobody can direct the men so well.

Mother (faintly). He is not here.

Hendrick. Not here?

Mother. He has gone to take Toon's place upon the Kappel Dyke.

Hendrick. What a fool I am to be

wasting time like this ; he told me he was going this morning, but I forgot.

[Forgetting his bad hand, he goes to open the door, but doubles up with pain.]

Mother (alert at once). Thou art hurt ?

Hendrick (evasively). It's all right.

Mother (imperatively). Let me look. *(Examines his wrist.)* Why, it is badly sprained.

Hendrick (impatiently). I cannot waste time on it now ; I must go and help the men.

Mother (quietly, as she gets out the necessary remedies). If thou dost not "waste time" over it now, it will be little enough help thou wilt give either to-night or for many days to come. *(HENDRICK makes a movement of impatience, which causes him to set his teeth with pain.)* Am I not right ?

Hendrick. Thou art, Vrouw ; but be quick, every man is wanted urgently.

Mother. I shall not keep thee long ; thou wilt save time in the end. *(Attends to wrist.)* Is—is the breach so very bad ?

Hendrick (nods). Pretty bad.

Mother. Dangerous ?

Hendrick. There is always danger with a wind and sea like this, but our men work well. *(Noting her distress.)* I will let thee know as soon as they are safe.

Mother (smiles through her tears). I shall be very grateful.

Hendrick. How is the baby, Vrouw ?

Mother (smiles bravely). Better ; we hope to have her quite well soon.

Hendrick. Were not Greta and Franz delighted ?

Mother. Greta can scarcely take her eyes off the cradle.

Hendrick. By the way, where are they ?

Mother (trying to subdue her emotion). They are both out. *(Catches her breath.)* Jan was— He had—

Hendrick (staggers back). By Heaven he might be— *(Checks himself.)* But Franz has gone to warn him ?

Mother. Not Franz ; he was out when the signal came. I had to send—Greta. *(Half sobs.)*

Hendrick. Greta ! That baby !

Mother. A baby maybe—*(smiles proudly)*—but a brave one ! *(Suddenly collapses.)* 'Tis her mother who is frightened ! *(Wind howls, and another flash is seen ; MOTHER springs up.)* Go, go, they need more help. I'll fix this round thy neck. *(Puts on a muffler like a sling.)* Keep thy hand in it when thou canst.

Hendrick. I do not like to leave thee thus.

Mother. Go—go at once. When a man is called to noble work, shall a woman bid him stay ?

[Opens door to let HENDRICK out.]

Hendrick (unsteadily). Good-night, Vrouw.

Mother. Good-night, Hendrick ; and quick success to your efforts. *(Shuts the door with difficulty, then walks up and down in distress.)* How can I bear this terrible suspense ! Strangers taunt us—say we are a stolid folk, we cannot be light-

hearted ; the cold and angry sea, for ever ready to engulf us, is so near.

[Sinks on to a chair, flings her arms on the table, buries her head in them, and sobs bitterly. These gradually become fainter, until she lies perfectly still. A long pause ; then the door bursts open, and FRANZ rushes in.]

Franz. Mother—*(struggles to close door)*—mother ! A dyke has burst ; the men are working bravely, keeping back the sea. *(Scared.)* Mother, dost thou not understand ?

Mother *(looks up, her face fixed and hard)*. Father !—*(gasps)*—Greta ! Where are they ?

Franz *(amazed)*. Greta ? Greta's here.

Mother *(wildly)*. Would God she were ! my little maid !

Franz *(scared)*. Mother, what do you mean ? Where is she ?

Mother. Gone to Kappel to warn father.

Franz. To Kappel, a night like this ? Greta ? Well, she is a jolly plucky one, to think she is a girl ! I don't believe I should have cared for the job myself a night like this.

Mother. They ought to have been here by now ! *(In great distress.)* Why, oh why don't they come !

[Drops her head on the table again and sobs.]

Franz *(bravely keeping back his terror)*. The — wind — is horribly

rough ; they can't walk quickly. *(Kneels by his MOTHER, and lays his head against her affectionately.)* I'm sure—mother—*(gasps)*—they must be safe.

[MOTHER puts her arm round his shoulder while he struggles to keep back his tears. Pause. Suddenly FRANZ moves into a listening attitude, looks inquiringly at the MOTHER ; then, still listening intently, gently slips away and goes to the window and looks out eagerly.]

Franz *(beside himself with joy)*. Mother, they are coming ! *(Rushes over and gently shakes MOTHER.)* They're coming ! *(Shakes her more violently.)* Mother, they are here !

[Door opens, and JAN enters with GRETA on his shoulder.]

Jan *(cheerily)*. Here's a brave little daughter for thee, mother.

[Jumps GRETA to the ground ; she puts the lantern down.]

Mother *(slowly rises, then runs forward with outstretched arms)*. Jan ! my Jan !

Jan *(lovingly)*. Myn Vrouw.

[He swallows her up in his huge embrace.]

Franz *(wild with delight)*. Greta, Greta, thou art a little brick !

[They rush into each other's arms, then dance round the MOTHER and FATHER.]

CURTAIN.

PEARL IN CORAL HALL

BY JENNIE MORTON

MUSIC BY GEOFFREY BLACKMORE

THE two scenes necessary for this play must be painted to represent the inside and exterior of Coral Hall. As both are supposed to take place beneath the sea,

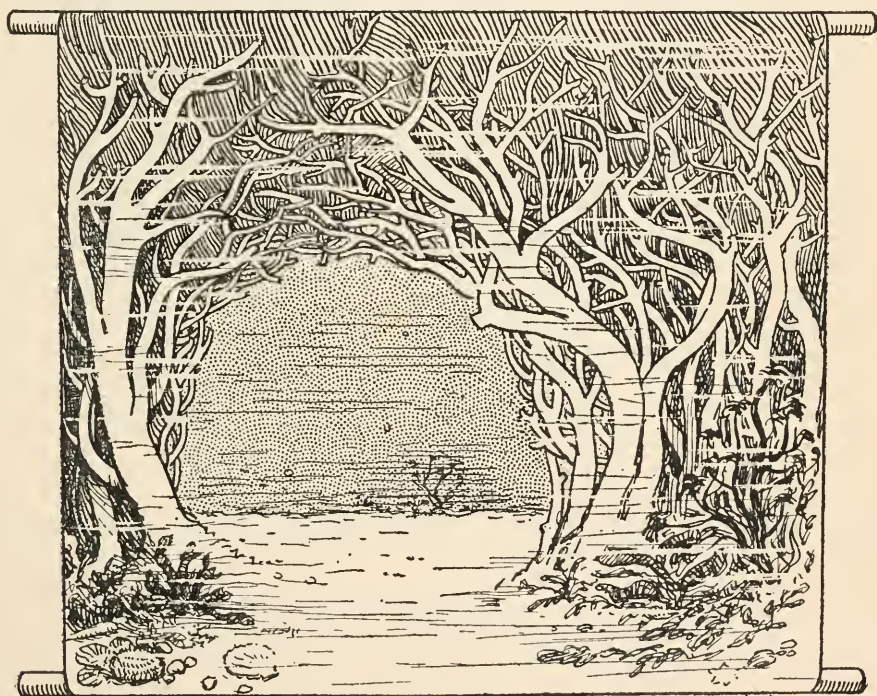


FIG. 1

it will be necessary to hang a piece of green gauze right across the stage throughout the play.

Scene I. should be painted with a back-cloth similar to that shown in Fig. 1, on which branches of coral twine together to form the walls of the palace. The wings can be made after the manner shown in Fig. 2—that on the right being constructed with a fairly large opening, the outline of which is irregular, occupied with a large throne made in the form of a scallop shell. This is raised some three

or four feet above the level of the stage, and is approached by steps covered with imitation seaweed made of brown cloth. The other wing should be painted to represent plain pillars of coral.

The exterior of Coral Hall can be very simply arranged, with the same wings placed as before, except that the throne is removed, whilst the reverse of the back-cloth is painted to show a strip of sand, still under water be it understood, with here and there a rock or piece of wreckage projecting through the sand. In fact,

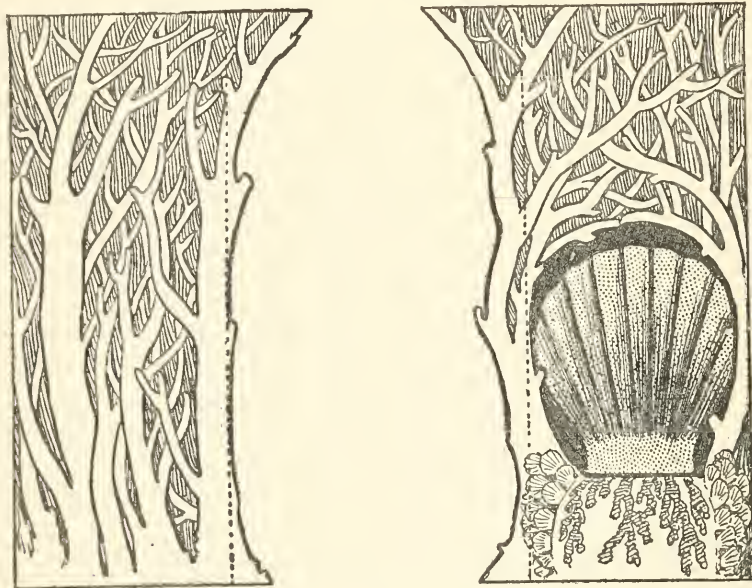


FIG. 2

the scene-painter may exercise his ingenuity to the full in depicting a realistic view of the bottom of the sea.

COSTUMES

King of Coral Hall.—This monarch may be dressed in a blue velvet tunic trimmed with gold lace, with white tights, velvet trunks, and a sequin belt to complete the costume. Upon his head should be a crown entwined with seaweed.

Jester.—The Court Jester should wear a loose tunic and green tights, with sponges and shells hung about him in a loose fashion. A large bunch of seaweed can dangle from the tip of his wand.

The Gentleman-in-Waiting.—A brown or black tunic with tights to correspond and a leather belt will suffice for the costume of the courtier.

The Mermaid.—This character does not appear entirely upon the stage as, leaning out of the coral cave, she is only visible from her waist upwards. A glance at Fig. 3 will give a suggestion as to how her costume may be made. A tight-fitting

sleeveless bodice should be covered with sequins to resemble scales. If sequins of sufficient size are unobtainable, the bodice may be covered with overlapping scales of cloth bordered with sequins in the manner shown at A. The Mermaid's hair should be loose down her back, in her hand she may carry a mirror, whilst a necklace, bracelets, and garland of shells may adorn her neck and arms.

The Coral Nymph.—Flowing robes of pink gossamer, with a crown, necklet, girdle and bracelets of pink coral will make this figure characteristic. Her bare feet should be encased in sandals.

Nymphs.—Three of the Nymphs should be dressed in white, and three of them

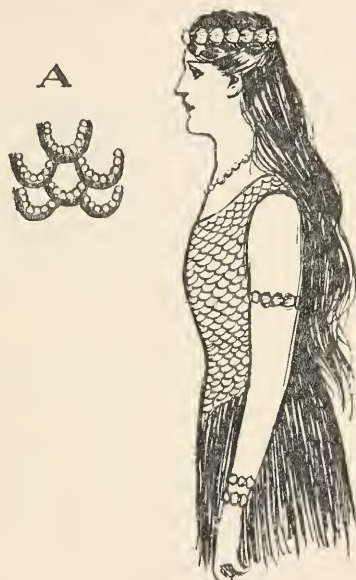


FIG. 3

in red, the costumes being made like that of the Coral Nymph. They may wear shells in place of corals—strings of cockle-shells threaded together serving the purpose admirably.

The Boy.—Short blue knickers reaching to just above the knee and a white sailor blouse with a black silk scarf, such as is worn by sailors, will be suitable for this youth.

Pearl.—In the first scene the little girl should wear a simple white frock without ornament whatever; but in the second scene she may have pearls in her hair and ropes of pearls about her neck. Her hair can be tied up with a ribbon, or left to flow freely about her shoulders.

PEARL IN CORAL HALL

CHARACTERS.

THE KING OF CORAL HALL.

JESTER, *a Sponge.*

GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING.

MERMAID.

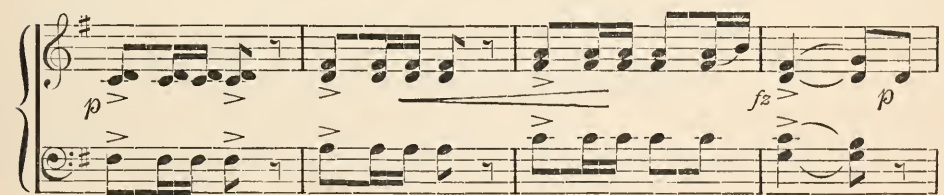
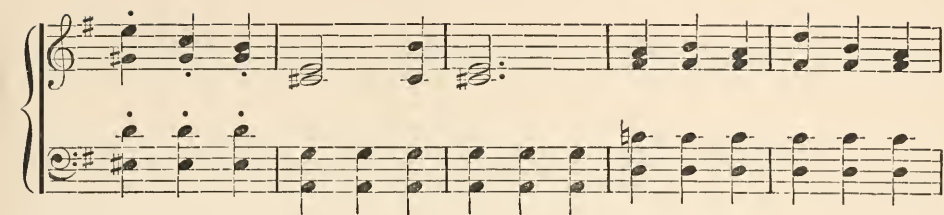
CORAL NYMPH.

CHORUS OF NYMPHS.

BOY.

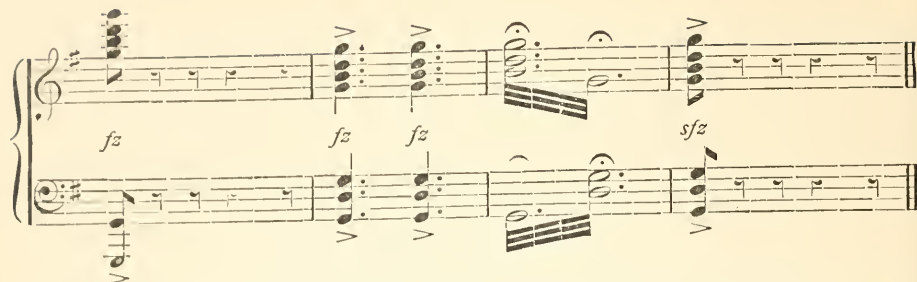
PEARL.

ACT I.—*Interior of Coral Hall.*ACT II.—*Exterior of Coral Hall.**Andante.*





This musical score is for a piano piece titled "PEARL IN CORAL HALL" on page 157. It is written for piano in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The score consists of eight systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The notation includes various chords, mostly triads and dyads, with many notes marked with accents (^). The piece features several dynamic markings: *fz* (forzando) appears in the third and fifth systems; *fff* (fortississimo) appears in the seventh system, accompanied by a fermata over a final chord. The music concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots at the end of the eighth system.



ACT I.

SCENE I.—Interior of Coral Hall.

At rise of curtain, KING seated on throne and JESTER lying at his feet.

King. Go fetch the Nymphs, that they may sing for me,
Thou sorry spectacle for kingly eyes to see.

[Exit JESTER, bowing low.

'Tis just three weeks, told by the tidal wave,

And yet no ship has found a watery grave.

Those mortal folk must needs be very 'cute

If they against my plans dare try their suit.

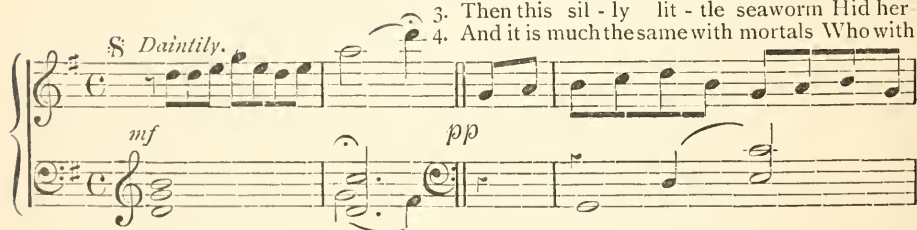
Coral Nymph and Nymphs. All hail! Our king must have a song.

Come, let us sing, and speed the hours along.

[Exit NYMPHS.

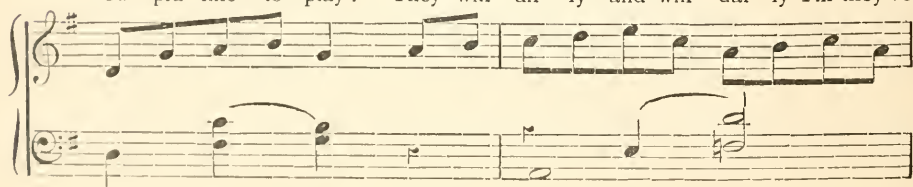
"THE GORGEOUS DORIS"

1. She was just a lit - tle seaworm, Yet the
2. But one day there came a strang-er, Such a
3. Then this sil - ly lit - tle seaworm Hid her
4. And it is much the same with mortals Who with

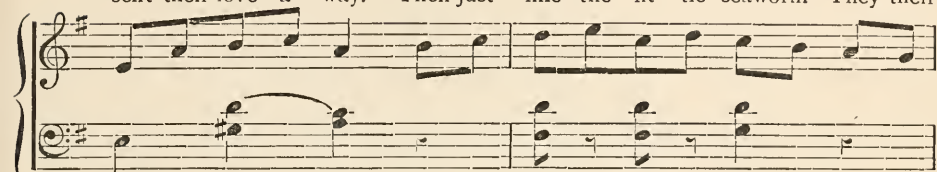


sweet - est you could see,
dap - per fish and smart,
head, and sad to tell,
Cu - pid like to play:

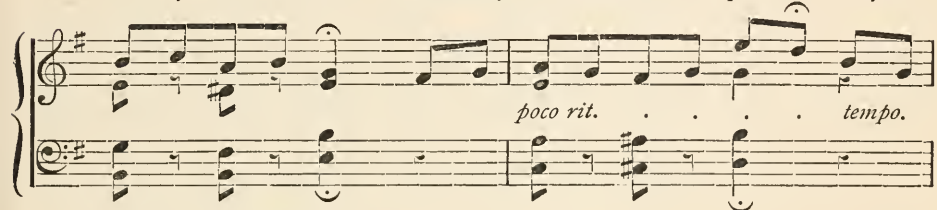
With her dain - ty gold - en ruf - fle Round her
And he spied the "Gorgeous Dor-is" When he
Left her ar - dent woo - er wait - ing While she
They will dil - ly and will dal - ly Till they've



neck curl'd lov - ing - ly ; And as mod - est as the vi' - let was this
 prompt - ly lost his heart. So he swish'd his tail po - lite - ly, But she
 van - ished in her shell. And this lit - tle fish in an - ger Turned his
 sent their love a - way. Then just like the lit - tle seaworm They their



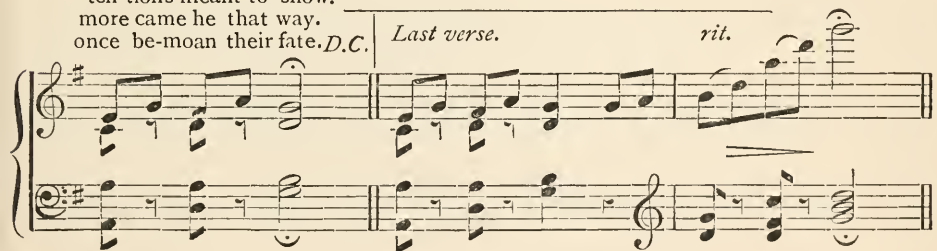
charm - ing lit - tle belle ; For she lived her life so lone - ly, In a
 did - n't seem to know That this gal - lant lit - tle lov - er His in -
 tail and swam a - way, For al - though he real - ly loved her, Nev - er
 fol - ly see too late ! When they find their love de - part - ed They at



bro - ken coc - kle shell.
 - ten - tions meant to show.
 more came he that way.
 once be - moan their fate. *D.C.*

Last verse.

rit.



Enter GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING.

Gentleman-in-Waiting. Your Ma -
 jesty, good news I have to bring,
 A vessel sunk, and such a monstrous
 thing.

King. Go one and all and search
 the vessel o'er,
 That you may bring me back a
 bounteous store.
 And if a maiden in your search you
 find,
 Be she alive, and goodly of her kind,
 A thousand sprats will I have slain
 this day,

In honour of your future queen.
 Away. [*Turns to JESTER.*

A song, a song, nor do thou hesi -
 tate

Thy king to please, for know I will
 not wait.

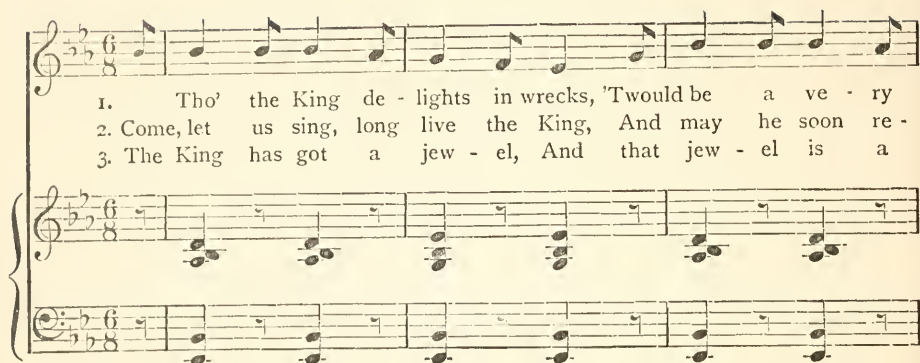
And should'st thou prove thyself an
 idle fool,

Banished from court thou'lt be, as
 is the rule,

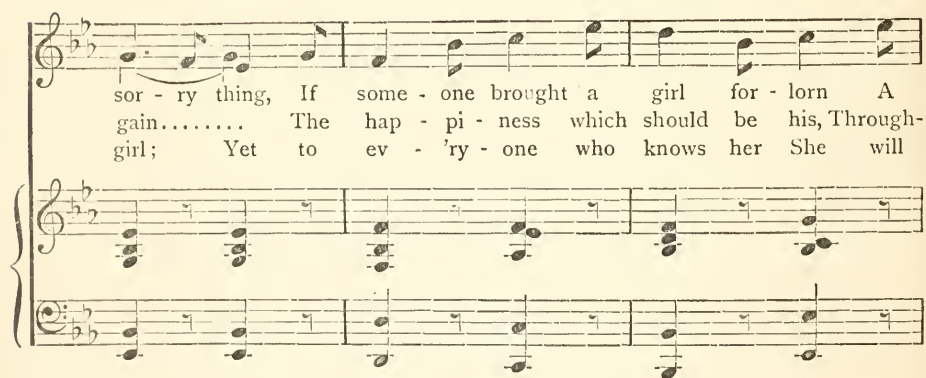
And piercéd through the neck by
 sword - fish bold,

Then hung on high till thou art stiff
 and cold.

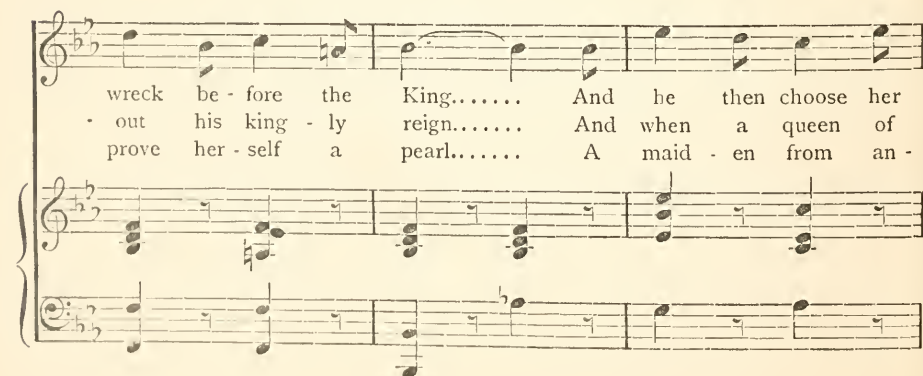
JESTER'S SONG



1. Tho' the King de-lights in wrecks, 'Twould be a ve-ry
 2. Come, let us sing, long live the King, And may he soon re-
 3. The King has got a jew-el, And that jew-el is a



sor-ry thing, If some-one brought a girl for-lorn A
 gain..... The hap-pi-ness which should be his, Through-
 girl; Yet to ev-'ry-one who knows her She will



wreck be-fore the King..... And he then choose her
 out his king-ly reign..... And when a queen of
 prove her-self a pearl..... A maid-en from an-

for his bride, And o - ver us to reign,..... We
 charm and grace He once a - gain will choose,... Let's
 - oth - er sphere, Yet win - some, bright and fair;..... We

ne'er would have a mo-ment's peace In Cor - al Hall a - gain....
 trust that she will wor - thy be, Nor king - ly trust a - buse....
 bid her wel - come to our realm, And all our joys to share.....

King. Ha! ha! Thy wits have
 saved thy head once more,
 Though they are scanty, yet from
 out their store
 Thou bringest words to please thy
 captious king,
 And at his bidding dost thou gaily
 sing. *[Exit.]*
Jester. Oh, my poor head, to think
 that you're secure;
 What trials a king's poor Jester does
 endure! *[Rings a bell.]*

Enter GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING.
 Go fetch the Nymph, that she may
 speak with me,

Thou sorry spectacle for such as *I*
 to see.

[Exit GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING.]

Enter CORAL NYMPH.

Coral Nymph. You sent for me—
 what is it you require?
 I have no time to waste, so hasten,
 prythee, sire.

Jester. To you, fair Nymph, I have
 a tale to tell,
 Of a poor Jester, how in love he fell
 With one so fair, so beauteous to
 behold,
 That he scarce dared his secret to
 unfold.

Coral Nymph. I do not wish to listen to your tale,
I've other things to do than hear you wail.

Jester. Why is it that you are so cold to me,
When even such as fishes in the sea
Dare speak to you, and you will condescend
To talk with them, as though they were your friend?

Coral Nymph. Of self-conceit you have a goodly share,
If you, a sponge, with fishes dare compare.

Do you not know that after you are dead
The uses you are put to? Why, 'tis said

That mortal creatures make themselves quite bright
By using you with water and sunlight.

'Tis not that you *are* clean, but *used* to clean,
Which hardly can be counted much, I ween.

And after all, a scrubbing life must be
Beneath the notice of a nymph like me.

Jester. Your words are scarcely colder than your heart,
And so, 'tis just as well that we should part.

E'en though a sponge, I know quite well
Whenever I'm not wanted, so farewell.

[*Attempts to go, NYMPH passes in front of him.*]

Coral Nymph. Adieu, my worthy follower, adieu!

Let's hope your heart will mend ere this day's through.

[*Curtsey, and exit.*]

Enter GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING.

Gentleman-in-Waiting. The Searchers have returned, go tell the king

That we a maiden fair to him may bring.

Jester. What, is there then a girl? Another verse!

I doubt if even death could be much worse.

Rejected by the Nymph. And made to sing

On any subject chosen by the king.

[*Exit in melancholy manner.*]

Gentleman-in-Waiting. She is a lovely maiden, to be sure,
Let's hope the old king's temper she will cure.

Ah! here he comes, but I must not be here,

Or else *my* head I'll lose, I greatly fear. [*Exit.*]

Enter KING and JESTER, talking.

KING sits on throne.

King. Just so, your wits seemed sharpened by the news.

You certainly the maiden will amuse.
Low at my feet, that I may see the maid,

Nor show thy face—lest she might be afraid!

Enter GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING with GIRL.

Gentleman-in-Waiting. Your Majesty, the maiden doth appear,
We beg of you her curious tale to hear.

Girl (aside). The king ; why, what
a queer old thing he seems !

I'm sure I've often seen him in my
dreams.

King. Come nearer, girl, that I
may see your face,

And know if you are fit my board
to grace.

How comes it you are with us
'neath the sea ?

Your tale must needs have audience
—tell it me.

Girl. Your Majesty, I have no
tale to tell,

Excepting that I knocked my head
and fell

On, to the cabin floor, then all
seemed dark.

Next I awakened, where close by—
a shark

Had stopped to rest. Oh, I was so
afraid !

Then this kind gentleman came to
my aid,

Bade me to cease my fears and with
him go,

And here I am, and that is all I
know.

King. And 'tis enough, poor child,
you look quite queer,

The shock has been too much for
you, I fear.

Your beauty is amazing for a girl,
Henceforth you shall be known to
all as Pearl. [*Turns to* JESTER.

A song, a song, and let it be of one
Who holds my every thought—till
day is done.

[JESTER *sings verse 3 of song,*
p. 160.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Exterior of Coral Hall.*

MERMAID *appears.*

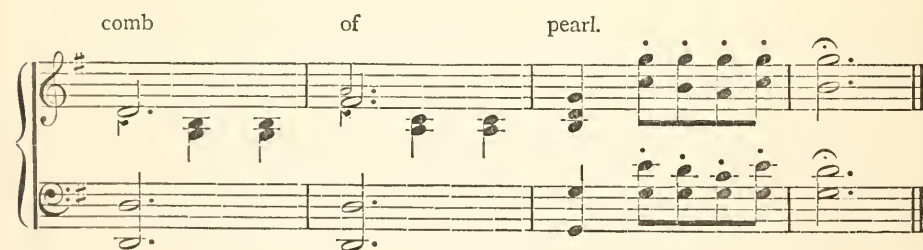
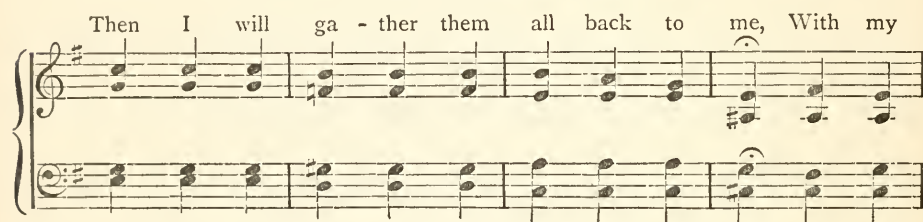
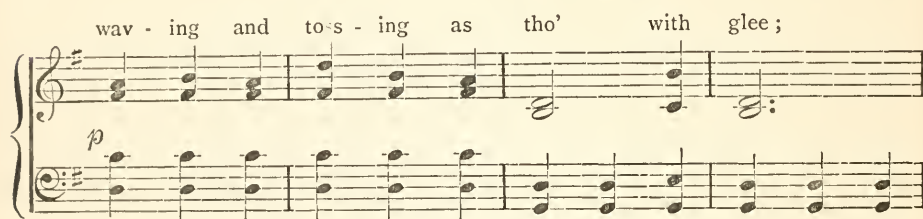
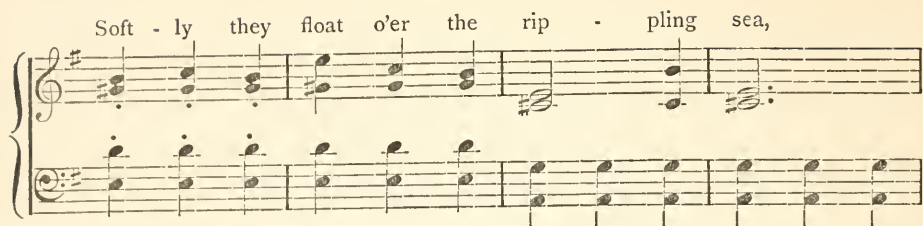
MERMAID'S SONG

Comb of pearl, Comb of pearl,

Valse.

mp

Gent - ly my tress - es un - tan - - gle ;



Enter PEARL.

Pearl. Mermaid, dear Mermaid,
just one moment stay,
I do so want to talk with you to-
day.
I'm so unhappy, for the king has
said,
Ere many days are past I shall be
dead
To all the world, for I'm to be his
bride.

And once as queen, I never step
outside
The Coral Hall. O Mermaid dear,
I pray
You'll help and tell me how to get
away.
Mermaid. The *only* way will be
for you to go.
You'll never dare defy him here
below.
Once, many years ago, a maidendared

To tell the king for him she never
cared,
And instantly with seaweed she was
bound,
And left to perish slowly on the
ground.

*Enter CORAL NYMPH, followed by
NYMPHS.*

Coral Nymph. Let us make merry,
for our time is short,
In half-an-hour we dance again at
court.

Ah, there is Mistress Pearl—but why
so sad?

Can't we do anything to make you
glad?

Pearl. You always seem to be so
full of fun,

I'm sure I wish you'd tell me how
it's done.

If I dare let my eyes rest on the
king

My spirits sink like lead; how you
can sing

And gaily dance is more than I can
tell.

It cannot be that I am in a spell,
Because when I'm away from him
I start

At once to plan the way I shall
depart.

Coral Nymph. But why is it you
wish to leave us all?

I'm sure to be the Queen of Coral
Hall

Is not a chance to laugh at, nor
despise,

When many would give all they
dearly prize

To have the chance that you now
throw aside.

Still, I'm not asking you to be his
bride.

Don't think that for one moment
I shall say

One word against you, if you get
away.

Pearl. I know you all are very
kind to me,

But I don't want to stay beneath
the sea.

Coral Nymph. Well, never mind,
come join us in our play,

And put such dull and dreary
thoughts away. [*Exit ALL.*]

Mermaid. Ah me, what sorry
creatures mortals are,

My mermaid life I'd rather live by far.

SONG.—“*Comb of Pearl.*”

Enter BOY—stands listening.

Boy. Fair Mermaid, what a lovely
voice is thine!

But not more glorious than thy
locks, which shine

Like cobwebs glittering in the wintry
sun;

I never thought to see so fair an one.

Mermaid. A mortal! well, I never
thought to be

So glad to hear and see one 'neath
the sea.

You are the very person I require;
A favour I would ask of you, good
sire.

But tell me first, how is it you are
here—

And why it is you've left your native
sphere?

Boy. A ship was wrecked not
many weeks ago,

And all her treasures with her lie
below.

I and my mates have come down
to explore,
And see if we some treasures can
restore.

Now, tell me of what service I can be
To one so beauteous and so fair to
see?

Mermaid. It seems that you would
rescue jewels rare—

There is one—Pearl—a maiden
wondrous fair,
Who is in sore distress. Our king
has said

Ere many days have passed that
she must wed

With him, and she, poor child, is
terrified

That she should have been chosen
for his bride.

*Enter PEARL. BOY turns and
sees her.*

Boy. My loved one! why, 'tis you
I have to save!

I never thought that 'neath the ocean
wave

My best beloved I should meet again.
In truth, I shall my precious "Pearl"
regain.

Pearl. Oh, listen, I must get away
from here—

Don't think that I'm not pleased to
see you, dear;

But I am so afraid, because the
king—

Boy. The Mermaid, dear, has told
me everything.

And now to her you'll have to say
adieu,

For time is short, and I would
rescue you.

My mates, you see, will think that I
am lost,

And I must take you back at any
cost.

Mermaid. Adieu, fair Pearl, and
may your life above

Be ever guarded by the one you
love.

SONG.—"Comb of Pearl."

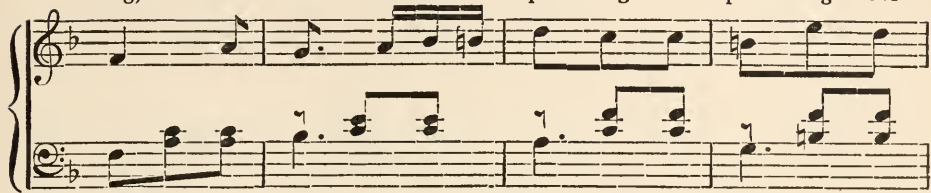
SCENE II.—*Interior of Palace.*

*KING on throne. JESTER lying at
his feet. CORAL NYMPH and
followers dancing and singing.*

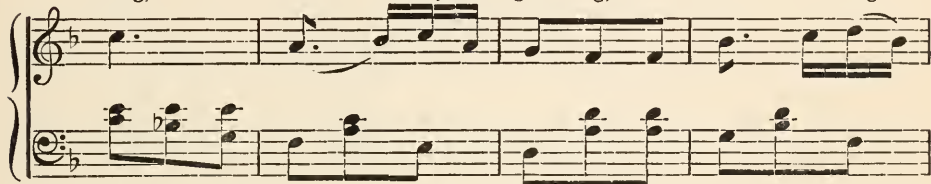
CHORUS OF NYMPHS

Allegretto. We are dain - ty lit - tle sea-nymphs, We dance and we

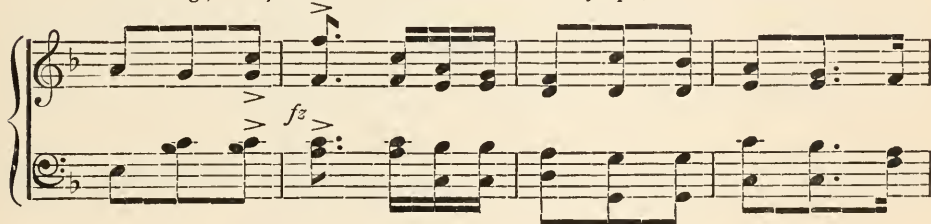
sing, And all our life we're spend - ing In pleas - ing the



King, Pos - ing and glid - ing, Then out of sight



hid - ing; Oh, come! and be a sea-nymph, And dance for the



King!



[Retire to side of stage, where they lie down.]

Gentleman-in-Waiting. Your Majesty, to you a tale of woe I bring; of one who should have loved you so—
Of Mistress Pearl—the maid you sheltered here.

King. You bring bad news of her, I greatly fear.

Gentleman-in-Waiting. The Mermaid says she met her wandering love,

And back with him has gone to realms above.

King. A song, a song, to ease my saddened heart!

Quick, if you'd live, nor act the dullard's part.

[JESTER sings verse 2 of song, p. 160.]

Coral Nymph. Your Majesty! I
would that I might be
Some help to you, in this your
misery.

I feel that mortal never could have
been

Found worthy of your love, nor for
our queen.

King. Well spoken, and methinks
that even yet

I'll find a bride who'll help me to
forget

One who has proved unworthy of
my trust.

Already does it fill me with disgust—
To think that she, a mortal, dare
refuse

My hand, and some poor earthly
creature choose.

Thou art in truth a nymph of good
repute,

Methinks that thou would'st not
disdain my suit.

Coral Nymph. Your Majesty! the
honour is too great,

To raise me thus unto a queen's
estate;

To such a height I never had aspired,
Nor hoped by kingly eyes to be
admired.

Your gracious offer humbly I accept,
And hope to prove to you all you
expect.

(*To NYMPHS.*) Come, comrade
Nymphs, let us with gladness
sing,

And with one voice acclaim—Long
live the king!

King. A song, a song, to sing my
lady's praise.

Come, laggard, hasten, and your
voice upraise.

Why do you falter with your eyes
bent down?

Up to your feet and find your voice,
dull clown.

JESTER'S SONG

Sadly.
p

1. I gave my love to one.... Who nev - er cared for me;.... But
was a beauteous nymph, Who danced be - fore the king;... And

I was so in love with her, I did not seem to see..... 2. She
I was just a jest - er poor, Who for my life must sing.....

King. Cease thy fool's wandering,
'tis enough to know
That you on love your scanty wits
bestow.

But you shall pay for having dared
to sing

Of your fool's love, for one who
weds the king.

[Turns to GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING.

Go toll the shells, that all may know
the news

Of one who did his Jester's rank
abuse.

(To JESTER.) Know this, you fool,
ere many hours are fled,

You shall be hanged and numbered
with the dead.

(To GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING.) Away
with him, nor bring him back
to me

Until the time has come, when I will
see

Him once again before he leaves
the Hall—

Ne'er to return.

Jester. Alas, how great my
fall !

[Exit JESTER with GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING.

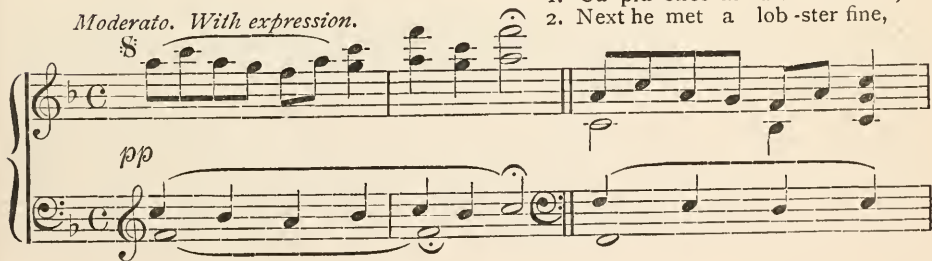
King (to NYMPHS). Now for a tale
and let us gloom dispel—

Sure some of you have something
you can tell.

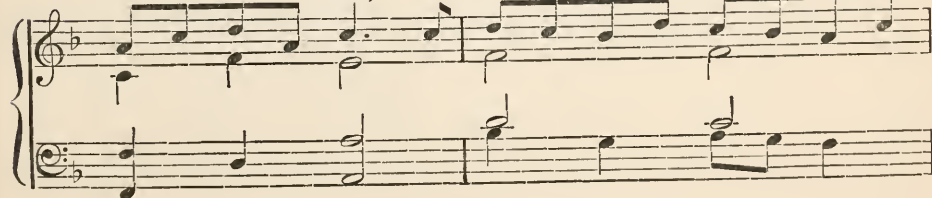
CORAL NYMPH'S TALE

Moderato. With expression.

1. Cu-pid once in div-er's dress,
2. Next he met a lob-ster fine,



'Neath the sea did go, To see the kind of love mak-ing That
In his suit of blue, But the la-dy he was with Was



went on down be - low,
not of gor - geous hue.

First he saw a mer - maid fair,
She was but a lit - tle sprat, And



Comb - ing out her locks,
quite of low de - gree ;

Cu - pid thought to see some fun, So
Cu - pid found this rath - er slow, So



hid be - hind the rock.
left them, don't you see?



If a long - er tale you wish, I can tell you of a fish Whom
day she used to wait Wav - ing to and fro her bait,....

Allegretto.



Cu - pid thought a mod - ern lit - tle Belle
Tempt - ing lit - tle fish - es pass - ing by,

She was
She'd have

of the an - gler kind, And when pa s - ing you must mi - d, Or she'll
caught all you the same, For she played the same old game Of the

hook you - how 'twas done I'll tell.
lit - tle spi - der and the fly!

Day by

King. Well done, fair maid, a
dainty tale to tell.
Methinks our Nymph will grace the
throne right well.

Enter GENTLEMAN - IN - WAITING
with JESTER. CORAL NYMPH
throws herself at feet of KING.

Coral Nymph. A favour I would
crave from you, kind sire.

King. My love, you shall have all
that you desire.

Coral Nymph. It is that you for
once will break your rule,

And grant a pardon for this sorry
fool.

King. You ask for much, but as
my word I gave,
Another chance will I give to the
knave.

Had this been other than the day
it is,

The death that he deserves would
have been his.

Take off the cloth that binds the
dullard's eyes,

And take heed, none of you the fool
despise.

The pardon must be full, and free
as air,
In honour of your future queen so
fair.

Jester (to CORAL NYMPH). Fair
lady, I would thank you from
my heart,

For having acted such a generous
part.

(To KING.) Your Majesty, thanks
unto you as well,

How much I feel I could not try
to tell.

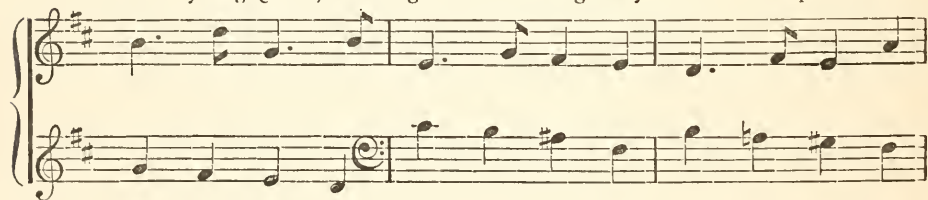
King. To revelry and mirth now
hasten all,
And ring the shells to call both
great and small.
A feast prepare. A banquet for the
queen,
On such a scale as never hath been
seen.
Bring pink anemones, and all things
fair,
And let the meanest creature have
his share.

CORAL NYMPHS' SONG

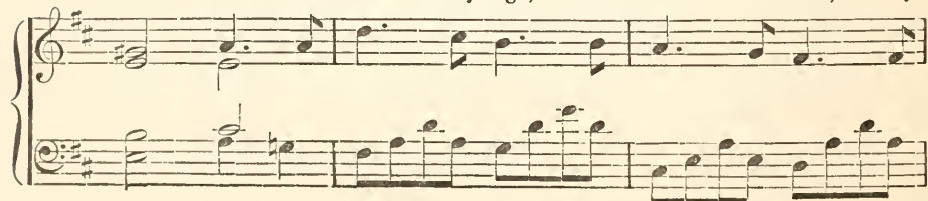
Come, fair nymphs, let us dance and sing, To our
Moderato.



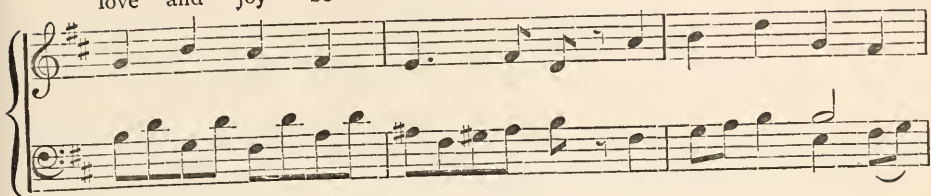
fair young Queen, and gra - cious King. May theirs be peace for



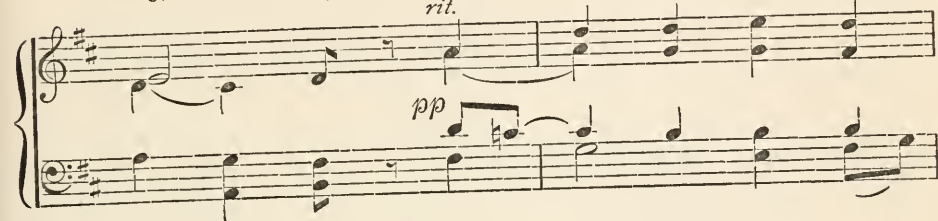
ev er ! Tho' storms may rage, and wrecks a-bound, May



love and joy be with them found, For ev - er and for



ev - - er, For ev - er and for



ev - - er!



CURTAIN.

THE CHERRY-BLOSSOM PRINCESS

By GLADYS EVELYN WARREN. MUSIC BY BRIDÉ O'KANE

WITH the addition of a flat made to represent a cherry-tree, the back-cloth described in connection with the garden in "The Frozen Palace" will serve admirably for the play under consideration. The special flat, Fig. 1, should

be painted to represent a cherry-tree in blossom, the effect being heightened by suspending a few imitation cherry-blossoms, A and B, by wires to some of the upper branches. Upon the inner side of the flat the end of an old brick wall is shown, whilst at the base of the trunk a little trailing creeper may just be visible. By the alteration of the lights evening effects may be produced without any trouble.

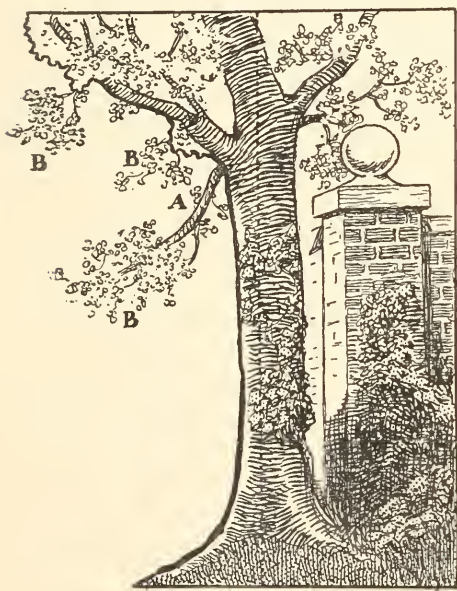


FIG. 1

COSTUMES

Prince Kenneth.—A very handsome and characteristic costume for the Prince is shown in Fig. 2. It consists of a flowered silk tunic with sleeves, white tights, pointed shoes, a red cloak lined with white sateen, and a red cap bordered with ermine. The front of the tunic should be embroidered and ornamented

with gold, its bottom and sleeves being trimmed with ermine or other fur. The large cloak, which has a fur collar, hangs from the Prince's shoulders, and is kept in place by a brass chain across his chest. White lappels trimmed with gold can be placed on the shoulders, whilst any additional gold chains may be used to ornament the front of the tunic.

In the second and third scenes Prince Kenneth should wear a cap and cloak made to represent a nightingale, the cap being cut after the pattern described in "The Mushroom Meadow." This, together with the long bird cloak, may be thrown aside in the last scene and pushed off the stage by some of the minor characters.

Princess Cherry-blossom.—The pretty old-world dress illustrated in Fig. 3 will serve admirably for the Princess. Its very simplicity makes it easy to pre-

pare. It consists of an emerald green silk dress trimmed with a darker green, simple sleeves and rather low neck. Upon her head is a large white pointed hat, from the top of which hangs a fine, white silk veil reaching almost to her waist. The hair is gathered back and concealed by other veiling.

When transformed into a cherry-blossom, the Princess should substitute a wreath of cherry flowers for the hat, and wind streamers of the same flowers around her body, festoons and garlands being strung to a wire and encircled round her waist. Care must be taken, when arranging these, to see that they will fall off



FIG. 2



FIG. 3



FIG. 4

easily when the time comes for the Princess to be restored to her own form once more.

The Old Nurse.—The costume for the old Nurse, Fig. 4, may be of the simplest description. She should wear a brown stuff dress, and a large cap, but should any alteration be made in the dress thus suggested, care must be taken to avoid dressing her in a gown that does not suit the period of the other costumes.

The Fairy Queen.—Together with her attendant fairies, the Queen should be dressed in the conventional fairy costume elsewhere described, with wings, wand and other fairy attributes. In the last scene the fairies should all carry scarves with which to conceal the transformation when the Prince and Princess regain the natural forms.

THE CHERRY-BLOSSOM PRINCESS

CHARACTERS.

PRINCE KENNETH.

PRINCESS CHERRY-BLOSSOM.

OLD NURSE.

FAIRY QUEEN.

ATTENDANT FAIRIES.

SCENE I.—*The Palace Garden. Cherry-tree in bloom, R.C. Rustic seat, L. TIME.—About midday.*

SCENE II.—*The same. Evening.*

SCENE III.—*The same. Three weeks later. Evening.*

SCENE I.—*The Palace Garden. PRINCESS discovered sitting on rustic seat, L. OLD NURSE standing beside her.*

Princess. These suitors are a frightful bore. I have refused four this morning, and I know there will be more coming, and I am so tired.

Nurse. Could not I interview them for your Royal Highness?

Princess (wearily). That would not be any good, because they would not propose to you.

Nurse (indignantly). I should hope not, your Royal Highness, seeing that I have been engaged these last fifteen years to the head coachman.

Princess. Oh, I meant they would not propose to you for my hand. (*Laughing disdainfully.*) Of course they would not want to marry you.

Nurse. Indeed, your Royal Highness, I don't know why they should not want to. Those princely suitors

may have fine titles, but it is the money they want nowadays, and I've a nice lot of that, seeing that my poor father left me all his late lamented earnings. I need not say my face is my fortune, so to speak.

Princess (laughing). No, it certainly is not!

Nurse (stiffly). I think your Royal Highness has misunderstood me. I never before knew any one find fault with my looks, and I don't want to suggest that I should do such a thing myself—though, of course, all other beauty would be overshadowed by yours, your Royal Highness.

Princess (serenely). Of course. (*Rises, and, while speaking, crosses slowly to cherry-tree, where she poses affectedly.*) My beauty is renowned all over the world. Every one has heard of the princess whose lips are cherry red, and whose cheeks are pink and white like the bloom, so that she is called Princess Cherry-blossom.

Nurse. True, your Royal Highness; and that is why suitors come from far and near to woo you. I think I hear one coming now.

Princess. It must be Prince Kenneth. He always comes at about half-past twelve in the hopes of being asked to stop to lunch, I suppose. He often declares he is faint with hope, and sick with desire,

for me, but I believe he means for lunch!

Nurse. Shall I stay with your Royal Highness?

Princess. Oh no! I would rather be alone with him. (*Softly, to herself.*) He is rather a darling. (*To NURSE.*) I want to give him his final dismissal to-day, so run away, Nurse.

Nurse. Yes, your Royal Highness. (*Limping away, and grumbling to herself.*) Run away! And me crippled with rheumatism! Run away, indeed!

[*Exit NURSE. PRINCESS sits on seat again, listens; then runs across to tree, plucks a few blossoms and puts them in her hair, returns hurriedly to seat and sits down, arranging her dress in dignified way.*]

Enter PRINCE KENNETH. *He bows low, and kisses PRINCESS'S hand.*

Prince. Good morning, Princess Cherry-blossom.

Princess. Good morning, Prince Kenneth. Is it not a beautiful day?

Prince. The day is beautiful, but not so——

Princess (*smiling complacently*). Not nearly so beautiful as I am.

Prince. Can you read all my thoughts, Princess?

Princess. Yes, of course I can.

Prince (*smiling*). Then I need not utter them, need I?

Princess. Oh yes—better say the usual stuff and get it over: Princess, I love you, will you be mine, and so forth!

Prince. I have only four words to say. (*Leans over back of seat, looking down at her, with his face close to hers.*) I want you, Princess.

[PRINCESS rises quickly.]

Princess (*teasingly, dancing away from him*). He who wants, shan't have.

Prince (*dodging round seat after her*). I want you, Princess.

Princess (*laughing*). You want too much. (*Waving him back, and coming to front of stage; proudly.*) I am the Princess Cherry-blossom, and no one is good enough to marry me.

Prince (*advancing towards her*). I know I am not nearly good enough for you, but—(*holding out his arms towards her boyishly*)—I want you, Princess.

Princess (*smiling*). You are a dear, Kenneth.

Prince. Do you love me, darling?

Princess (*laughing*). I love freedom better. (*Proudly.*) I am the fairest flower in the world, and I want to bloom on by myself, admired by every one, not plucked, and made the property of any Prince.

Prince. Shall I never win you, Princess?

Princess (*discouragingly*). Not till my beauty is withered away! (*Disdainfully.*) I cannot waste it on you. I would as soon give my life for you as give you my heart!

Prince. You are cruel—very cruel!

[*Going away.*]

Princess. Are you going, Kenneth?

Prince. Yes, I am going away, and I shall not return. You have broken my heart I think, Princess Cherry-

blossom, and I suppose you are not even sorry.

Princess (laughing). Why should I be? (*Proudly.*) Nothing matters to me except my beauty. (*Very proudly.*) Remember, I am the Cherry-blossom Princess!

Enter FAIRIES. KENNETH stands still, in surprise, and bows low to FAIRY QUEEN.

Fairy Queen (severely, to PRINCESS). You shall indeed be a cherry-blossom princess.

Princess. Of course I shall!

[KENNETH about to depart.]

Fairy Queen. Stay, Prince Kenneth; you must hear the Princess's punishment.

[KENNETH starts, and goes towards PRINCESS, as though to protect her.]

Princess (half indignantly, half frightened). My—punishment!

Fairy Queen (severely). Yes, Princess. You would break Prince Kenneth's heart rather than yield to him because you are so proud of your cherry-blossom cheeks. You wish to bloom on independently, admired by every one, so you shall! I have come here to turn you into a cherry-blossom.

Princess. Help!

Fairy Queen (waving her wand). It is no use crying for help.

Princess. O Fairy Queen, have mercy!

Fairy Queen. Did you have mercy on your suitors? No! You laughed at the noblest and truest of them. Expect no mercy from me.

Prince. O Fairy Queen, spare the Princess! Punish me in her stead.

Fairy Queen. Nonsense, boy. Do be rational.

Prince. The Princess has been wearied with suitors; it is not to be wondered at if she has got hard-hearted.

Fairy Queen. She shall become a cherry-blossom, lying at the foot of yonder tree.

Princess. But I might wither and die!

Fairy Queen. No; for Prince Kenneth's sake I will sprinkle you with the fairy dew of Love, and as long as that is in the heart of a blossom it cannot die.

Princess (wonderingly). The fairy dew of Love!

Fairy Queen. Yes, Princess; be thankful that Kenneth loves you truly, for otherwise I could not have given you this fairy dew.

Princess (beginning to cry). But I don't want to be a blossom at all. I shall lie on the ground all day, and never be able to talk or move or—play with Kenneth.

Fairy Queen. Are you sorry not to be able to talk to Kenneth any more?

Princess (crying). Ye-es, and I'm sorry I was horrid to him. (*Putting out her hands towards PRINCE.*) Forgive me, Kenneth.

Prince (kissing her hand). Princess—you are never horrid.

Fairy Queen. As you have said you are sorry, I will give you one more boon. From sunset till dawn

you shall have power to move and talk, but no one except the birds will be able to understand you.

Princess (a little shyly). Not even—Kenneth?

Fairy Queen (smiling slightly). That I cannot tell you. Now, away! Fairies, take the Princess to the Transformation room in Punishment Palace, and bring her back here as a cherry-blossom, sprinkled with a little fairy dew.

[FAIRIES lead weeping PRINCESS away. PRINCE tries to follow and stop them.]

Fairy Queen. Stay, Kenneth, if you love the Princess, and listen to me.

Prince (eagerly). Can I break the spell?

Fairy Queen. Only by becoming a nightingale can you hope to break the spell, and then you will not be able to do it unless the Princess offers to give her life for yours. She may do this one day—how, I may not tell you—and if so you *must* accept the sacrifice, and then she will become a princess, and you a prince, again.

Prince. O Fairy Queen, please turn me into a nightingale at once!

Fairy Queen. Do not be in such a hurry, Kenneth. Listen! If the Princess does not ever try to give her life for yours *you will never become a prince again*, and you might starve to death, or be killed by a cat. Think well before you take the risk, but if you decide to become a bird, for the sake of that proud girl who

flouted you, come to me in an hour's time in the Fairy Dell. Farewell!

[Turns to go.]

Prince. Stay, Fairy Queen, I—

Fairy Queen. I cannot stay a moment longer. I am due at a christening, and I must get there before the Bad Fairy—thank goodness, her horrid, new-fangled motor-broomstick always breaks down, so she never arrives anywhere punctually. [Exit.]

Prince. I wish she would have stayed and turned me into a nightingale at once. Of course I would take any risk for my darling's sake. Poor little Cherry-blossom Princess! I want you more than ever—and perhaps—perhaps—you will want me—now.

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.—*The Palace Garden.*

About the time of sunset. PRINCESS (dressed as cherry-blossom) lying at foot of tree.

Enter NURSE, looking anxiously around, very agitated.

Nurse. Oh dear! oh dear! where can the Princess be? I've hunted high and low, high and low, till my head buzzes and I feel as though I were a humble bee. (*Calling.*) Princess Cherry-blossom! (*PRINCESS tries to move, and fails.*) Princess Cherry-blossom! She can't have been hiding all this time. Perhaps one of those horrid suitors has eloped with her. Oh dear!

oh dear! what a wicked world it is, to be sure! I would have given my life for her willingly, and now—*(very indignantly)*—here's the King saying I am to be executed if her Royal Highness is not found within a month from to-day. Here's James and me have been engaged these last fifteen years, and—*(wiping her eyes with her apron)*—if he isn't to marry me now because I'm an executed woman, I call it downright hard. Well, she isn't here, that's certain, and it is no use my staying out any longer. The sun will be setting, and I shall catch a chill, and if I am to be executed I want to be executed dignified like, not coughing and sneezing.

[Exit NURSE.]

Stage darkens slightly. (If possible, the twittering of birds should be heard. A toy orchestra would be very effective.) The PRINCESS slowly raises her head and becomes animated.

Princess. If only I could have moved before, or called to Nurse—but I suppose she would not have understood. The Fairy Queen said only the birds would understand me. I wish Kenneth were here—just to look at even. I'm so lonely—

Enter KENNETH as nightingale, at back.

—and so unhappy. [Begins to cry.]

Prince *(chirpily)*. Cheer up, Princess!

Princess *(looking up)*. Kenneth, Kenneth, where are you?

Prince. I am here, Princess.

Princess *(looking about)*. Where? I can only see a little nightingale.

Prince. I am Kenneth, turned into a nightingale.

Prince. O Kenneth, how dreadful! Who bewitched you—some Bad Fairy?

Prince. No; the Fairy Queen told me that only by becoming a nightingale could I help you.

Princess. And you became a bird for my sake? O Kenneth, how good you are!

Prince *(tenderly)*. Not nearly good enough for you, little Cherry-blossom Princess.

Princess. It is unkind to taunt me like that!

Prince. I did not mean to. I meant what I said, Princess, because—I love you.

Princess *(with shy dignity)*. And—I love you now, Kenneth.

Prince. Darling! [Kisses her.]

Princess *(laughing)*. Oh, what a funny little peck!

Prince. I feel so happy!

Princess. I wish I did. I do hate being a cherry-blossom. I am miserable—I must be the most miserable person in the whole world.

Prince. You must not think that, little Princess. All this afternoon I have been flying about the city, and I have seen many others quite as unhappy as you.

Princess *(smiling)*. I suppose there is some consolation in that! Tell me what you saw, Kenneth.

[Seats herself.]

Prince. It might weary you, Princess, for you must often have

heard how some of your subjects are unemployed and almost starving, and some slaving—girls no older than you are, having to spend hour after hour drearily working in hot, crowded rooms.

Princess (hanging her head). No, Kenneth, I never thought about those subjects before. I—I—only thought, as I drove through the city, "how the people must be admiring me—their Cherry-blossom Princess!"

Prince. Poor little Princess! Every one has tried to spoil you—no wonder you could not think of others less fortunate.

Princess. Are all my poorer subjects unhappy?

Prince. Oh no, Princess. As I flew through the city to-day I saw a great hospital, and some of the poor little cripple children were playing merrily at being doctors and nurses, with a teddy-bear for their patient, and some of those in bed were looking at scrap-books and laughing at the funny pictures.

Princess (jumping up, and coming forward). How plucky of them to play and laugh when they were ill! I should have cried, and cried, and cried, and wanted the doctors executed, and the nurses dismissed, for not curing me at once!

Prince. And I saw some little children, who had had nothing to eat all day but a crust of bread, dancing gaily to a barrel-organ.

Princess (approaching KENNETH). How could they dance if they were half-starved!

Prince. You can do anything if you try.

Princess (sitting down, dejectedly). I could not dance if I were unhappy.

Prince (laughing, leaning over back of seat). You could not be unhappy if you danced! Try.

Princess. Oh, I cannot!

Prince (laughing, coming round in front of her). Yes, you can. Come on, little Cherry-blossom. Pretend the evening breeze is blowing you about and I am trying to catch you.

Princess (jumping up, and clapping her hands). Oh, that would be fun!

(DANCE.)

Prince. Bravo, Princess!

Princess. I feel much jollier now. It is quite fun being a cherry-blossom!

Prince. Of course it is, and it's splendid being a bird—one feels so—so chirpy!

Princess (suddenly). Can you sing?

Prince. Of course I can. I am a nightingale!

Princess. Oh, do sing to me!

Kenneth. Very well. Sit down over there—(*points to cherry-tree.* PRINCESS obeys)—and I will sing you a Japanese song about a cherry-blossom.

CHERRY BLOOM AND DEWDROP

Moderato. *mf*

Oft 'tis sung in

sweet - est sto - ry How a Cher - ry Bloom did blow

In the hour of morn - ing glo - ry One fair spring-tide

long a - go. And in hap - pi - ness and bliss A

This system features a vocal melody in the treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are "long a - go. And in hap - pi - ness and bliss A". The piano accompaniment consists of a right hand with chords and eighth notes, and a left hand with sustained chords.

dew - drop wooed her with a kiss, While the bees humm'd soft and

pp rit.

This system continues the vocal melody. The lyrics are "dew - drop wooed her with a kiss, While the bees humm'd soft and". The tempo/mood marking *pp rit.* (pianissimo, ritardando) is placed above the staff. The piano accompaniment continues with similar harmonic support.

low In that gar - den long a - go.....

rit.

This system continues the vocal melody. The lyrics are "low In that gar - den long a - go.....". The tempo/mood marking *rit.* (ritardando) is placed above the staff. The piano accompaniment continues with similar harmonic support.

This system shows the continuation of the piano accompaniment from the previous system, featuring chords in the right hand and sustained chords in the left hand.

f poco più mosso.

Ro - sier pink now she is bloom - ing, Red - der grow her

This system contains the first line of the musical score. It features a vocal melody in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo/mood is indicated as *f poco più mosso.* The lyrics are: "Ro - sier pink now she is bloom - ing, Red - der grow her".

cher - ry lips, And un - a - ware of dan - ger loom - ing,

This system contains the second line of the musical score. It continues the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "cher - ry lips, And un - a - ware of dan - ger loom - ing,".

Sweet - est scent the dew - drop sips. While, in ten - der -

This system contains the third line of the musical score. It continues the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Sweet - est scent the dew - drop sips. While, in ten - der -".

- ness and bliss, They con - fess their love like this, So

This system contains the fourth line of the musical score. It concludes the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "- ness and bliss, They con - fess their love like this, So".

down in - to her heart he dips,... And her sweet - est

This system contains the first line of the song. It features a vocal melody in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are 'down in - to her heart he dips,... And her sweet - est'. The piano accompaniment consists of a treble and bass staff with chords and moving lines.

Tempo primo, con dolore.
per - fume sips. But a cru - el

This system contains the second line of the song. The tempo and mood are indicated as 'Tempo primo, con dolore.' The lyrics are 'per - fume sips. But a cru - el'. The musical notation continues with the vocal line and piano accompaniment.

sun-beam glar - ing sought to woo the Bloom that day, And for oth - er's

This system contains the third line of the song. The lyrics are 'sun-beam glar - ing sought to woo the Bloom that day, And for oth - er's'. The musical notation continues with the vocal line and piano accompaniment.

pain not car - ing, Made the dew - drop melt a - way.

This system contains the fourth line of the song. The lyrics are 'pain not car - ing, Made the dew - drop melt a - way.' The musical notation concludes the system with the vocal line and piano accompaniment.

Then, as life seemed all a - miss, Death a - lone could

bring her bliss, She dropt in - to a pool and lay With her

love to drift a - way.

Princess. What a beautiful song! How the Cherry-blossom must have loved the Dewdrop! (*Laughing.*) I love my dewdrops, because without them I should wither and die! Do sing me that song again.

Prince. I cannot do that, because dawn will be coming, and I must fly away again over the great cities.

Princess (*piteously*). Oh, don't leave me!

Prince. I must leave you now; but I will come back every evening

after sunset to sing to you, and to tell you all about the wonderful places and people I see.

Princess. I wish I were a Princess again and could help those poor people, instead of being a powerless little cherry-blossom.

Prince. Even a little cherry-blossom can do something. Do you know, every time you dance the perfume of your petals will float away on the breeze to the hospitals, and sick-rooms, and stuffy factories,

and the people will be strengthened and cheered by your fragrance.

Princess. What a lovely idea! I shall always want to be dancing now.

Prince. Bravo, Princess Cherry-blossom! I will sing all day to the poor and needy and tell them about you. Farewell!

Princess. I cannot bear to say good-bye to you—supposing—supposing—you should get hurt! O Kenneth, you ought not to risk your life as a bird even for my sake. Proud Princess Cherry-blossom is not worth it.

Prince. Who is the proud Princess? She has disappeared, and left only the loveliest, sweetest, dearest, most tender-hearted little blossom in her place. Farewell!

Princess. Farewell! (*Exit PRINCE.*) He is gone, and I am all alone, but I must be brave. It is nearly dawn and soon I shall be a still blossom again. I will dance to rest.

[*Dances. Sinks down to sleep at foot of tree.*]

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.—*The Palace Garden.*

PRINCESS seated under tree.

Princess (wearily). I am hot—I do wish the breeze would come and fan my petals. It is getting late too—where can Kenneth be? Every evening for the last three weeks he has flown to me, and we have danced together, and he has sung beautiful songs however tired he

has been—and he has seemed very tired lately. All the other blossoms are fading away—only the fairy dew of Love keeps me alive. There has been no rain for ages and all the birds are thirsty—no one ever puts out water for them. How thoughtless people are! (*Starts.*) Why, of course, I used not to think about the birds till I became a cherry-blossom and fell in love with a nightingale. How funny that sounds! Oh, why does not Kenneth come! Where can he be? Supposing—supposing—some one has caught him—Kenneth! Kenneth!

Enter KENNETH, very slowly.

Where can you be?

Prince (speaking rather faintly). Here I am, Princess.

Princess. Are you tired, Kenneth?

Prince. I—am—rather—Princess.

Princess. Where have you been to-day?

Prince. I have been flying over dusty roads.

Princess. And whom did you see?

Prince. I saw a tramp walking along and he threw away a piece of bread, so I flew down to pick up a crumb, and he hurled a stone at me.

Princess. O Kenneth, are you hurt? [*Strokes him anxiously.*]

Prince. My wing was bruised and I could not fly properly, and a cat came after me and—and—I nearly died from fright, and then I thought of you, and I made a desperate effort and fluttered away just in time.

Princess. My nightingale Prince! You ought never to have become a bird, although I do not know how I could have existed without your company and your songs.

Prince. I love singing to you, little Cherry-blossom.

Princess (eagerly). Are you too tired to sing to me now?

Prince. I am very hot and thirsty. Perhaps, if you would fan me first, I might be able to sing.

[PRINCESS dances round PRINCE, fanning him with her petals.

Prince (faintly). Thank you—thank you! Now perhaps I shall be able to sing.

[Tries to sing. His voice breaks, and he falls back, exhausted.

Prince. I—am—afraid—my throat is—too—parched. Is not there any water anywhere?

Princess. I cannot see a drop. (Putting her arm round PRINCE, to support him.) O Kenneth, what shall I do?

Prince. Never mind, Princess—Princess, I—(pants)—I think I am going to die—I cannot—(gasping)—live—without—water.

Princess. There is none to be found—all the flowers are fading—except me, and I—why, of course, there is fairy dew on me. You must drink that. See, it is sprinkled on my heart. Drink quickly.

Prince. I must not—you would die—Princess.

Princess. I could not live without you now, my nightingale Prince—

so drink of the fairy dew—and live.

Prince. You must not give your life for mine.

Princess. I would gladly do that. What matters my life! I am only a blossom—drink!

[PRINCE leans towards PRINCESS, appearing to drink up her dewdrops. PRINCESS sinks down on ground, under cherry-tree, as though dead. PRINCE kneels beside her.

Prince. What have I done? I thought to break the spell, and now I have lost my little Cherry-blossom Princess, and—(piteously)—I cannot live without her.

Enter FAIRIES.

Fairy Queen (touching PRINCE with her wand). Be of good heart, Kenneth. The cherry-blossom is indeed withered away, but your Princess shall be restored to you, for you have broken the spell, and you shall be a Prince again. (To FAIRIES.) Fairies, weave your magic well! Gaily dance while breaks the spell!

[FAIRIES, waving scarves, dance round PRINCE and PRINCESS, hiding these two while they slip off their bird and flower costumes respectively. When this is done PRINCE and PRINCESS come forward, and FAIRIES push discarded clothes off scene, using their scarves to hide this action.

Prince (joyfully). My Princess!

Princess. My darling Prince! You have broken my spell!

Prince. No; you broke it, by offering your life for mine.

Princess. You gave your life for me first by becoming a nightingale—no reward could be too great for you.

Prince. It is a great reward that I ask. (*Tenderly.*) I—want—you, Princess.

Princess. Do you really want the proud Princess? Are you sure you love me now that I am no longer just a dear little blossom?

Fairy Queen. You will never be a proud Princess again.

Prince. No; you will always be just my own sweet little Cherry-blossom. [*Kisses her.*]

Enter OLD NURSE. She screams with surprise.

Nurse. The—Princess! Oh, my

darling Royal Highness, I am glad to see you—now I shall not be executed!

Fairy Queen (to NURSE).

The Prince and Princess

Have returned to you,

For both have tasted

The magic dew.

(*To FAIRIES.*) Fairies, dance round, and wish them well.

Surround them with Love's fairy spell.

[*FAIRIES dance forward and encircle PRINCE and PRINCESS, then dance round them.*]

PRINCE sings first verse of "Cherry Bloom and Dewdrop," substituting "A song-bird" for "A dewdrop."

Princess. My Nightingale Prince!

Prince. My Cherry-blossom Princess!

CURTAIN.

SNOWDROP AND THE SEVEN DWARFS

By WINIFRED DARCH

THE principal scene in this play is laid in a room in the Royal Palace, arranged as a box-scene, Fig. 1. The first flat is covered with tapestry, and the second contains a window, the sills of which, made of cardboard, give the effect of the whole being pierced through a deep and massive wall. In the middle of the large double flat,

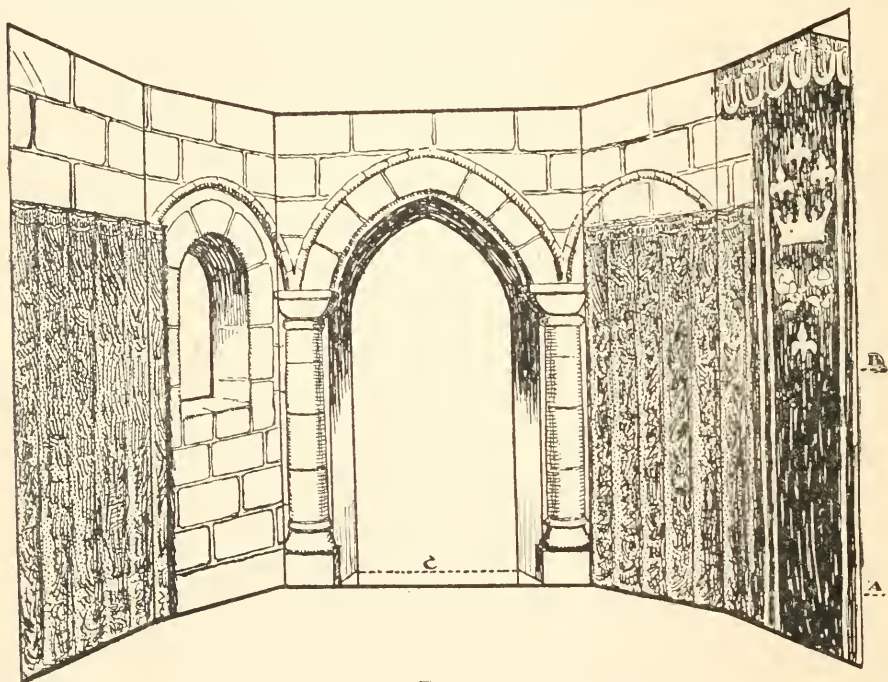


FIG. 1

in the centre, is a doorway which, as it serves for the exits and entrances, must be curtained, the bottom of the curtain only reaching to the line C, as the thickness of the wall being painted on the flat, the deception must be carried out systematically. The remaining flats serve to form the back of the thrones, which are placed on a dais raised about twelve inches from the floor at A, the thrones coming to B.

The lonely forest in which the action of Scene IV. takes place can be made with the back-cloth and wings already described in "Health, Wealth, and Happiness"; whilst the same scenery, with the addition of the cave built for "King Uggermugger,"

will serve for Scenes V. and VI. The remaining piece for the last scene can be adapted from the mountain back-cloth illustrated in "King Uggermugger."

COSTUMES

Ferdinand, King of the Carpathians.—The sixteenth-century dress shown in Fig. 2 will prove very suitable for this monarch. The tunic and trunks are slashed in front, the former having sleeves laced over white silk with white frilled cuffs. Around his neck is a large frill or ruff, whilst a red cloak lined with ermine hangs



FIG. 2



FIG. 3

from his shoulders. His legs are encased in white tights, with garters and rosettes, whilst his square-toed shoes are slashed. In the illustration the King is made up with a light brown beard, but this is quite optional and, if desired, may be dispensed with.

Yolanda, the Queen.—A very pretty costume for the Queen will be a pink silk dress, cut after the fashion shown in Fig. 3. The sleeves, which must be rather full, should be edged with ermine, beneath which a slashed under-sleeve, with a frill round the wrist, is visible. A chiffon frill over her breast can be tucked into the embroidered band, as illustrated in the figure. From beneath her crown a long gauze veil, ornamented with imitation pearls, should reach to the knees.

Snowdrop.—The Princess may wear a costume very similar to that of her mother,

the only difference being that the colour should be white, whilst in place of the large crown she can wear a small and dainty coronet.

Michael, Prince of the Pyrenees.—A very suitable costume for the young Prince will be that worn by Prince Sunlight in the "Frozen Palace." Small differences can be introduced here and there, but the general features of the dress should be the same.

Ladies of the Court.—The four court ladies must have costumes somewhat different to that of the Queen, and may be dressed after the fashion shown in Fig. 4. When Evadne has become Queen, however, she will have to change her



FIG. 4



FIG. 5



FIG. 6

head-dress, and make several alterations in her gown, to betoken her elevation in rank.

Marietta.—The old nurse should wear a simple dress with a plain white linen hat, similar to that described for the nurse in "The Cherry-blossom Princess."

The Four Lords of the Court.—With slight differences in ornamentation and colours, the four lords should be dressed after the style of the Prince, their costumes not being quite so fine, and unadorned with any rich jewellery. In every other respect the Prince's suit will serve as a model for those of the courtiers.

The Huntsmen.—An idea of how the huntsmen should be dressed is given in Fig. 5. Plain jerkins made of buff casement cloth to imitate leather, green tights and high buff-boots are the main feature of the dress. A tunic lined with brown leather can be worn over this jerkin, whilst a green cap with a red feather in it should

be upon his head. A large hunting-horn must hang at the side, being suspended from the belt by coloured cords.

Sylvana, the Fairy.—A good fairy costume for Sylvana will be that of Titania, as described in "Won." The colours may be altered, however, to make her seem more like a rural sprite, whilst any other changes that may suggest themselves can be incorporated in the finished dress.

The Seven Dwarfs.—These little people should be dressed in green or brown tunics, with red breeches, stockings, and pointed shoes to match, Fig. 6. With a make-up of white beard and moustache their figures will be complete.

SNOWDROP AND THE SEVEN DWARFS

CHARACTERS.

FERDINAND, *King of the Carpathians.*

YOLANDA, *his wife.*

SNOWDROP, *their daughter.*

MICHAEL, *Prince of the Pyrenees.*

EVADNE

CECILIA

MELISANDE } *Ladies of the Court.*

PERPETUA

MARIETTA, *Snowdrop's nurse.*

GERARD

PAUL

STEPHEN

HUGO

ROBERT

NICHOLAS } *Huntsmen.*

SYLVANA, *the fairy.*

RIP

NIP

KIP

FIP } *The Seven Dwarfs.*

JIP

TIP

PIP

THE SPIRIT OF THE MIRROR.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the King's Palace. The four ladies are playing cards.*

Cecilia. Lady Evadne, you have won again!

You are the cleverest player e'er I saw.

Now, Melisande, it is your turn to deal.

Evadne. I'll tell you why I always win my game;

I sit and think of what I mean to do,
And never gossip about veils and caps

When I am playing.

Melisande. Hush! here comes the Queen.

Enter QUEEN YOLANDA.

Madame, how fares your Grace?

Have you commands

To give to us? Would have us sing to you?

Perpetua. Or shall I play some air on my guitar,

Or would you like a stroll across the park?

Evadne (looking out of window).

'Tis snowing fast; your Grace would sure catch cold

If you went out. Say, shall I read to you?

Queen. No! none of these. I'd rather be alone.

Cecilia, hasten! my embroidery
fetch. *[Exit CECILIA.]*

Then all may go; but first, Evadne,
tell

The King when he comes in to
come to me.

Evadne. Yea, madam! *(Aside.)*
"Tell the King!"

Would I were Queen,
To order thus my lord and king
about!

*Enter CECILIA with embroidery; then
exeunt omnes except QUEEN.*

Queen (alone). Why am I sad—
why is my heart so sore?

Ever we want some gift we cannot
have.

'Tis said, the fairies on my cradle
smiled,

And one Sylvana was my guardian
sprite,

But never has she given gifts to me.
[Walks to window.]

O snow, white snow!

So softly falling,

Dost hear a Queen

Thy sweet name calling?

Fair snow,

Snow in the skies

And on the ground,

See how the earth lies white around.

*[She is working, and pricks her
finger.]*

Faith! I was foolish dreaming;
how it hurts!

My finger! Blood! Yes—three
red drops of blood

Have stained the snow. Red roses
laid on white

Were not more strangely fair. I
wish—I wish—

Dear fairies hear!—I wish that I
might have

A little child; white, like the snow
around,

With lips as red as blood; and
whose dark hair

Should shame the raven's wing.

[She sighs.]

Alas! vain wish.

Enter SYLVANA.

Sylvana. Hail to you, bright-
tressed Queen! this kingdom's
pride,

My own god-daughter! I, Sylvana,
come

From Fairyland; and you shall have
your wish:

Shall have your child when the first
snowdrops come.

Queen. O kind Sylvana, what
thanks shall I give

For your great goodness?

Sylvana. Nay! I know your
thanks.

But mark my words. Beware the
fair-tressed maid

They call Evadne; for she hates you
sore,

And gladly would be Queen instead
of you. *[Exit SYLVANA.]*

Queen. Evadne always is most
good and kind.

Why should I fear her? Ah! I am
so pleased

About Sylvana's promise; I must
run and tell the King.

Enter EVADNE.

Evadne. The King has just arrived.

Queen. Oh! I can't wait;

I'll go and meet him. *[Exit.]*

Evadne (alone). I wish I were a queen.

Once long ago
I met a witch, and she declared to me
I should be one. What shall I do
in here ?

[*Looks into MIRROR and
arranges her hair.*

Really, I think that I now look
Nearly as pretty as our lady Queen.
I wonder what this glass would say
of it

If it could speak.

Mirror, Mirror, hanging there,
Who in all the world's most fair ?

[*MIRROR speaks ; EVADNE
starts in terror.*

Mirror. Queen Yolanda with her
ruddy hair
In all the world is surely the most
fair ;

But next to her, in this our land,
Does the fair-tressed Evadne stand.

*Evadne (who has fallen to the ground
in terror).* Oh, how afraid I am !

Oh, dreadful glass,
That speak'st with mortal voice !
Are thy words true ?

[*Advances slowly.*

Mirror, Mirror, on the wall,
Speak me truly once for all :
Shall I ever be a queen,
Wear a crown and jewels sheen ?

Mirror. When thou give her a
poisoned glass,
Then shall this thing come to pass.
Ere another Christmas-tide
Thou shalt be a royal bride.

[*EVADNE remains gazing above her,
as if at an imaginary crown.*

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.—*The same. The KING and
QUEEN on their thrones. The
four courtiers and ladies grouped
around.*

King. This, my Yolanda, is a joy-
ful day,

Whereon we hold a blithesome
christening feast

For our sweet daughter. But how
strange a name

You chose for her !

Queen. What ! Snowdrop ?

King. Yes, indeed !

I would have had our royal Princess
called

Constantia, Alladine—or Yolanda,
like

Yourself ; but Snowdrop !

Queen. Nay, my dear lord, but
Snowdrop is her name.

She is my Snowdrop-child ; and
here she comes.

Enter MARIETTA with baby.

Now, Marietta, give my child to me.
Behold her, lords and ladies ! See
your Queen

Of times to be. Come and salute
her now.

Stephen. A marvellous pretty
child ; so like your Grace.

Cecilia. Nay ! like his Majesty.
A man can't tell

What person a child looks like.

Gerard. To you I pay my homage,
royal Princess.

Melisande. May all the fairies
smile on you, sweet blossom !

Paul. May you be married to a
king most famous !

Perpetua. And may you be most
wise and beautiful !

Hugo. May all the people of this country love you!

Evadne. My wishes now! (*Aside.*)

May all misfortunes dog you,
And may you not escape my hand
that hates you.

Enter SYLVANA.

Sylvana. Hail! and good greeting
to this fair assembly.

All. Hail, great Sylvana, fairy
of the wood!

Queen. Come you unto our
daughter's christening feast?

Sylvana. I do! (*Takes baby.*) Lo!
little child, I hold thee now
As I thy mother held; and take thee
under

My charge and care. Alas, poor
little maid!

Sorely thou'lt need it in the years to
come.

(*To KING.*) King, guard thy
daughter well, and never let her
Want thy protection. Now must I
away

To my own Fairyland, where waits
my Queen,

Bright-haired Titania, whom all
sprites and elves

Love to obey. Farewell unto you
all. [*Exit SYLVANA.*]

King. Now what is coming next
in this day's sports?

Gerard. It is the custom always,
that the Queen

Should drink the Princess' health
in an old cup

Given by the fairies to your royal
house.

King. And who presents the cup?

Gerard. Her Grace's eldest maid.

Evadne. That is I! I have the
cup prepared.

King. Then bring it forth. Sweet
Yolanda, you shall drink
Health and good fortune to our
daughter here.

[*EVADNE gives the cup to the*
QUEEN.

Queen. Good health to thee, my
Snowdrop dear, I drink.

I kiss thee, Blossom—Husband!
Hold me fast!

I die! [*Falls into the KING's arms.*]

Melisande. Bear her to her own
room; she will revive.

[*QUEEN is carried out, followed*
by all except EVADNE.]

Evadne (*alone*). Nay! she will not
revive. Within that cup
Lurked deadly poison; but I by
my craft
Will make them think she died by
natural means.

[*Advances to MIRROR.*
Mirror, Mirror, hanging there,
Who in all the world's most fair?

Mirror. Evadne, there thou now
dost stand,
The fairest lady in the land.

CURTAIN.

SCENE III. (*twelve years have*
elapsed).—*The same.*

MELISANDE, PERPETUA, and HUGO,
talking.

Melisande. Tell me, Sir Hugo, are
there any snowdrops
Out in the garden?

Hugo. There were; but Queen
Evadne has commanded

They should be rooted up and
thrown away.

Perpetua. How strange that she
so hates the snowy flowers !

Poor Queen Yolanda loved them
passing well !

Melisande (mysteriously). There is
another Snowdrop that she
hates !

Hugo. Hush, Lady Melisande !
the walls have ears.

And if the Queen should chance to
hear your words

You'd sore repent them, and the
wrath would fall

On our poor Princess too !

Perpetua. Poor little maid !

The good Yolanda sorely would
have grieved,

If she had known Evadne was to reign
As crownèd Queen and treat her
daughter so !

Melisande. Wherefore does not
her fairy guardian come,

The wise Sylvana ? It is in her
power

To shelter Snowdrop.

Hugo. I think the King's be-
witched ; he stirs no hand

To shield his daughter from her
step-dame's power.

Enter SNOWDROP and MARIETTA.

Snowdrop. Nay, Marietta ! let me
rest a while

And see my friends. I'm not a baby
now ;

I'm twelve years old to-day—(*aside*)
—and not a present

From my own father.

Marietta. My Princess, if her
Grace should find you here,

She would be much displeased.

She says small girls

Should not be seen too often ; be
heard—never.

Snowdrop (pettishly). Oh ! I know
what she says. Dear Marietta,

Tell me some tale about my own
dear mother,

The sweet Yolanda ; her whose
picture hangs

Above my bed.

Enter GERARD.

Gerard (bowing to SNOWDROP).
Pardon, your Royal Highness, I
imagined

His Grace the King was here ; for
there is come

A royal prince to see him.

Snowdrop. Say, his name ?

Gerard. He is Prince Michael of
the Pyrenees,

And comes from a far-distant land
indeed.

Snowdrop. The King and Queen
are hunting in the forest,

But I will see Prince Michael.

[*Exit GERARD.*]

Marietta. You, Princess ?

Snowdrop. Yes, Marietta, for a
birthday treat.

Gerard. Prince Michael of the
lofty Pyrenees.

Enter MICHAEL.

Snowdrop. Welcome, Prince
Michael ! you have come from
far.

I'm the King's daughter ; Snowdrop
is my name.

Michael. I am most fortunate in-
deed, Princess,

To meet you thus. I've come so far to see you.

Snowdrop. To see *me*? That is funny; I've ne'er met

Any one who wanted to see me before.

Enter KING, QUEEN, CECILIA, PAUL, and STEPHEN.

My father, here is some one come to see you.

He said, "Come to see me," but I suppose

That was a kind of joke.

Evadne. Come hither, Snowdrop. Why are you here? Back to your schoolroom run;

This chamber is forbidden ground to you.

Now, Marietta, mind you whip her well!

[PRINCE MICHAEL *has been speaking to the* KING, *but his eyes follow* SNOWDROP and MARIETTA.

King. And do I understand your words, Prince Michael, That you desire my daughter's hand in marriage?

Michael. I do indeed. Across the lonely hills Have come the tidings of her, and I came

And proved those tidings true. Upon my knee,

King Ferdinand, I beg your daughter's hand.

Evadne (sharply). This is ridiculous! She is a child— A naughty, misbehaved, ill-tempered child—

Very unfit to sit upon a throne

For many years to come.

King. I greatly fear, Prince Michael, that my lady's words are true.

But still—

Michael. But still I love her; and no word

That you can say can lessen this my love.

King. Well! give me time, and stay with us some days.

Now come and see my stables. I've a horse,

A glorious Arab, that shall be a gift To the wise king, your father.

[*Exeunt omnes, except* EVADNE.

Evadne. Yolanda's child! Yolanda's child! I hate her!

And now she seeks to break her nursery bounds,

And Michael of the Pyrenees himself Asks her in marriage. What does this thing mean?

It means i'faith that I am growing old,

And Snowdrop grows and charms the people's hearts.

What does my Mirror say?

Mirror, Mirror, hanging there, Who in this our land's most fair?

Mirror. Evadne of the shining hair

Was long in this land thought most fair;

But fairer now in people's eyes

Is Snowdrop, young and sweet and wise.

Evadne (stamps). And shall she push me from my rightful seat?

Say! shall *she* do this deed— Yolanda's child?

Not while I live!

[*Rings bell.*

Enter CECILIA.

Evadne. Bid Robert, the chief
huntsman, come with speed
To this our chamber.

Cecilia. Yea, madam !
[*Exit* CECILIA.

Evadne. Snowdrop must die, but
not as Yolanda died—
That were not wise ; but see where
Robert comes !

Enter ROBERT.

Robert, you are a tried and trusty
servant.

Here's gold for you, and more shall
come hereafter,

When—when—Robert, you know
the Princess ?

Robert. The Princess Snowdrop,
madam ?

Evadne. Yes ! the same.

I hate her, and I fain would have
her killed.

Robert (starting). Madam ! you
mean not this ?

Evadne. Yes, faith I do !

Do you and Nicholas take her away
Into the lonely forest, and once
there,

Chop off her head, and bring the
news to me

That she is dead and buried. No
more words !

But go and do it.

Robert. But, madam, if the King
should hear of this,

Both Nicholas and I were good as
dead.

Evadne. I'll tell the King—you
know he will believe me—

The disobedient Princess ran away

Into the lonely forest—there some
wolf

Did eat her up. So Snowdrop's
fate is sealed.

Robert. Madam, we will obey you.
Now to search

And find the Princess.

[*Exit* ROBERT.

CURTAIN.

SCENE IV.—*The Lonely Forest.*

Enter ROBERT, NICHOLAS, and
SNOWDROP.

Snowdrop. Say ! how much farther,
Robert, must we go ?

I am so tired.

Robert. Well, sit down awhile
And rest you. Here's a piece of
cake to eat.

[*Aside to* NICHOLAS.
It's time to do it ; but my mind
misgives.

How can I kill this innocent young
maid ?

She thinks we're taking her across
the wood

To see her cousin. Say ! how can
we do it ?

Nicholas. If we must do it, let us
do it quickly.

Speak to her, man, and never look
so pale.

Robert. Princess !

Snowdrop. Must we go on ?
Do not say yes.

Robert. Your Highness, all I have
to say is this—
Prepare to die !

Snowdrop. Why, Robert, are
you joking ?

If so, it is a very foolish joke.

Robert. It's deadly earnest. By the Queen's command
I must cut off your head ; so just kneel down,

And with your kerchief bandage up your eyes.

Snowdrop. O Robert, Robert, and I thought you kind !

You used to play at hide-and-seek with me ;

You gave me rides upon your shoulder once,

And called me little Princess—

And will you kill me ? I could never think

That you could do such dreadful wickedness

Unto a girl who never hurt you once, Or if I ever did, I never meant it,

And I am very sorry. Robert, spare me !

And do not kill me in this lonely wood.

Robert. Princess ! it is the Queen whom I obey.

Snowdrop. Then, Nicholas, you are my good friend too ;

I once thought everybody was my friend

Except the Queen—always, except the Queen.

Tell Robert he must not obey her now,

For her commands are wicked.

Nicholas. No doubt of that, your Highness ; but the Queen

Will give us money, store of ruddy gold.

Snowdrop. I see it's useless pleading with you both,

For you would rather have this horrid gold

Than save poor Snowdrop's life.

O mother dear !

Bright-haired Yolanda ! are you near me now ?

[*She binds her kerchief round her eyes and kneels down.*]

Robert (*lifts axe, drops it*). I cannot do it—I would rather die.

Rise, Princess—rise ! you shall go free for me.

Nicholas. And for me too—but we shall meet with trouble.

Snowdrop. Thank you ! Oh, thank you ! Shall we now go home ?

Robert. You can't do that ; the Queen would only kill you And us as well. You must stay here alone.

Snowdrop. Alone ! Alone in this most dreary wood

Must I be left ? O Robert, I am frightened !

Robert. Yes, you must stay. Farewell to you, O Princess !

Come, Nicholas !

[*Exeunt ROBERT AND NICHOLAS.*]

Snowdrop (*alone*). Alone ! alone ! all in the silent wood !

How dim and dark it is ! And not one sound

Now they are gone. I wish one little thing

Would stir—a rabbit—or a bird—or mouse.

Ah me ! I am so tired ; I will sleep. [*Sleeps.*]

Enter SYLVANA.

Sylvana. Alas for thee, poor luckless child !

Sleeping alone in forest wild.

Yet fairies guard thee through thy sleep,
And tender watch will constant keep,
Till this dark night of storm and sorrow
Shall turn at length to happy morrow. *[Exit.]*

Snowdrop (waking). I had a dream.
I thought a fairy stood
Beside me, sleeping, and her voice
was kind.
I am no more afraid. I'll find some hut
Where a kind forester will take me in,
And I will work most hard to earn my bread,
If only they will keep me safe and sound. *[She sings.]*

Silver moon to guide me,
Through the forest wild;
Fairy forms beside me,
Watching o'er their child.

Lo! the fairies golden
Smiled upon my birth,
Who since time was olden
Still have walked the earth.

I, the King's one daughter,
In a palace born,
Shall in woodland water
Bathe my face at morn.

Bind my long dark tresses
By its mirror bright,
Tossed by the caresses
Of the windy night.

I, the child of sorrow,
I, the child of snow,
Heedless of the morrow,
Know not where I go.

And though dangers ring me,
Fear I not at all.
Sure my guides will bring me
To some friendly hall.

CURTAIN.

SCENE V.—*The Cave of the Seven Dwarfs.*

Enter SNOWDROP.

Snowdrop. I wonder who lives here! Is no one in?
Oh, how tired I am!
I've wandered miles and miles before
I found
This little cave, 'neath the mountain side.
Ah! there's a nice big chair—I'll just sit down
And rest a while! *(Sits down.)* I am—so—sleepy! *[Sleeps.]*

Enter one by one the seven DWARFS; they do not see SNOWDROP.

Rip. Now, brothers, put your tools away;
Our work is really done to-day.
Tip. I am so hungry, I could eat
An elephant, head, trunk, and feet.
Nip. And with this thirsty mouth
of mine

I could drink up the river Rhine.

Pip. When will this stupid chattering stop.

I am so tired I'm fit to drop.

Jip. Gracious! Who's meddled with my plate?

There's more than half my supper ate!

Kip. And who's been drinking from my cup?

This is nice, when one wants to sup.

Fip. And, O respected Rip—look there,

Who's sleeping in your big arm-chair?

Rip. Well! What a liberty to take!

Tip. Say! if I touch it, will it break?

Nip. Is it a puppy or a cat?

Pip. And what a funny one at that!

Jip. It isn't! it's a fairy elf.

Kip. It made a good meal by itself.

Fip. O Rip! please tell us, I'm so wild.

Rip. I'll tell you. It's a human child.

Fip. How shall we wake her?

Shall we shake her?

Or do you think 'twould really break her?

[*SNOWDROP wakes with a scream, and tries to run away. DWARFS surround her.*]

Rip. Little maid,

Be not afraid

Though the dwarfs surround thee;

Safe as in a royal hall

With brave guards around thee.

Pip. Say your name,

Whence you came,

Through the wild March weather.

Did the breezes bear you here

Lighter than a feather?

Snowdrop. O little men, who look so grave and wise,

I am a King's child most unfortunate.

My wicked stepmother has sought to kill me.

I therefore, here upon my knees implore you,

Save a poor maid, who in your hands is helpless!

Save luckless Snowdrop, Ferdinand's one daughter!

Nip. You shall be our sister;

But what can you do

To repay the kindness

We shall show to you?

Snowdrop. I'll scrub your floors till they're as white as snow;

I'll rub your window as the diamond clear;

I'll make the beds, I'll bake, I'll brew, I'll spin,

For I have learnt all these aright to do,
As well-brought-up princesses ought to learn.

Rip. Why! here's a sister for us, quite a model

Of domesticity and rare good order!
But one thing, child, beware—be very careful

To whom you ope the door when we are out.

For if your stepmother should e'er find out

That you're alive, there will be mischief brewing.

[*The DWARFS join hands and pace round SNOWDROP.*]

All (singing). We have a sister of our own,

A royal sister too;

The cleverest little maiden known,
To wash and bake and brew.

Then raise three cheers, my merry men,

The workers of the hill;

And strive with all your might and main

To guard her from all ill.

CURTAIN.

SCENE VI.—*The same.*

SNOWDROP and the DWARFS
conversing.

Fip. Good-bye, little sister ; we're going out to work.

Snowdrop. Take care then, little brothers, your task you do not shirk !

All. Mind, dearest Snowdrop, shut the door !

And let no stranger pass the floor.

[They all kiss her and exeunt.

Snowdrop (sweeping).

They always say the same, but no one comes,

Nor will come now. A whole long year has passed.

Wicked Evadne thinks that I am dead.

Well ! let her think so ! I am happy here,

Although it sometimes *is* a little dull.

I often wish that some one would pass by

For me to look at through the window-panes.

Still, I must not complain—the dwarfs are kind,

And take me lovely rambles on the hills,

And show me all their wondrous treasure caves.

Yet still I wish I might my father see,

And my old Marietta, and the folk

Who were so kind to me. I sometimes wonder

About Prince Michael—I mean him I saw

On that last day at home.

[Knock at the door.

Surely that cannot be my brothers back.

[Another knock ; she opens door a crack and sees EVADNE disguised as an old woman.

Evadne. Pretty young maiden, may I come within

And show you wares, for I've got many goods

Tempting to eyes of girls. Both ribbons and jewels

With perfumes and laces, with combs and fair kerchiefs.

Snowdrop. Pardon, good woman, that I must seem rude,

Much I regret I cannot ask you in, Nor see your goods which sound so very nice.

Evadne. Pray, gentle maiden, let me rest awhile

By your kind hearth. I am sore weary now,

For twice ten miles I've tramped since dawn of day.

Snowdrop (aside). Poor thing, she looks so tired and forlorn,

Carrying that heavy basket on her arm.

I needs must ask her in ; she can do no harm.

Nought but a pedlar she—not like the Queen.

(Aloud.) Enter, I pray you. I'll fetch bread and milk.

Enter EVADNE. SNOWDROP gives her a chair, and fetches bread and milk.

Evadne. Thank you, kind maiden ; and for your reward

Look at my wares, and choose what like you best.

Snowdrop. Among so many and such lovely things, to choose is rather hard. This necklace, now, is charming;

But then I never go to parties now.

This kerchief is most pretty; but pray tell me

What are these things—they look just like two combs.

Evadne. Why, so they are!

Snowdrop. But why two combs together?

Evadne. Do you pretend, my child, you have not heard
How combs are all the rage to dress the hair?

Why, you wear ribbons! Oh, my simple girl!

They're out of date entirely. No one now

Would show her face at court without side-combs.

To puff the hair out they're the very thing.

Let me just show you.

[*Arranges combs in SNOWDROP'S hair.*]

There now, you look much fairer than before,

My pretty mistress; but what is the matter?

You are not well?

Snowdrop. I do not know.
It hurts—oh——

[*Falls senseless on floor.*]

Evadne. Lo! there's an end of you and all your charms,
My simple Snowdrop; and so thus fall all

Who dare to cross the Queen
Evadne's path! [*Exit.*]

After a while re-enter DWARFS.

All. Snowdrop!

[*They cluster round her.*]

CURTAIN.

SCENE VII.—*The Mountain-side.*

SNOWDROP is lying on a bier covered with flowers; after a while enter DWARFS.

Dwarfs (singing). Oh! yester eve
full many a flower

We wove to make the garlands fair;
They were to deck thy little bower,
To make a chaplet for thy hair.

Now pallid flowers thy pale hands fill,
And pallid blossoms deck thy brow;
Thy maiden shroud is whiter still,
And whiter than thy shroud art thou!

Rip. Snowdrop, we leave thee
sleeping on this hill.

Thou wast our joy, and now thou
art our grief.

Farewell! [*Exeunt DWARFS.*]

Enter MICHAEL.

Michael. Still do I wander, restless o'er the world.

Still in my heart there cries a voice,
"She lives!"

Still will I seek her over marsh and moor,

My sweet young love, the dream-bride of my thoughts.

[*Sees the bier.*]

Say!—What is this? A maid
asleep—or dead?

Ah! it is Snowdrop! My white
Snowdrop here!

And cold and dead ! O Snowdrop !
Snowdrop !

[*He sinks on his knees beside her.*
Canst thou be dead, my Princess ?

Lo ! thy lips
Are warm with life—the rose is on
thy cheek.

Waken ! O Snowdrop ! I, thy prince,
have come.

[*He lifts her up ; the combs
fall from her hair.*

She breathes, she lives ! O Snow-
drop, I have found thee !

My bride, my princess, found thee
now at last.

Snowdrop. And hast thou come,
Prince Michael ? I have slept
For long—but all my dreams were
full of thee.

Michael. I dreamt of thee, awake ;
but let us hasten,
Soon shall the joy-bells for our
marriage ring.

CURTAIN.

SCENE VIII.—*The Palace.*

CECILIA and MELISANDE discovered.

Cecilia. How restless is the
Queen ! She's always trying
To find some new distraction. I
don't think

She's had a peaceful hour since the
Princess

So strangely and so suddenly was lost.

Melisande. And that is true ; but
here, I think, she comes.

Enter EVADNE.

Evadne. Depart, my ladies ! I
would be alone. [*Exeunt ladies.*
Still racked with fears, and still
distracted with dread ;

Still haunted by the thought of
Snowdrop's face,

I find no rest. What though the
Mirror says

I am the fairest. Still I find no joy.
I'll speak to it again.

Mirror, Mirror, hanging there,
Who in all the world's most fair ?

Mirror. Evadne, thou art fair, I
ween,

But younger and sweeter is our
future Queen.

Evadne (stamps). O hateful Mirror !
What does this foretell ?

Enter KING.

Ah ! here's the King, and he shall
tell me straight.

King. Evadne, since thou know'st
we have no child,

And Snowdrop—she my little one,
my own—

Is lost for ever, I'm resolved to make
Young Michael of the Pyrennes my
heir,

And he comes here to-day—and
with him brings

The maiden whom he seeks to make
his wife.

So give her welcome meet, for she
shall be

A daughter unto thee. What ho !
my lords,

Come here ! prepare to greet the
noble Prince.

*Enter lords and ladies ; MICHAEL
leading SNOWDROP, veiled.*

Welcome, my heir, who should
have been my son,
Sweet Snowdrop's husband. Show
your bride to me ;

If she be half as good, and kind and fair

As my poor daughter, you are fortunate.

Michael. Sir, she is all that your sweet daughter was.

Behold! [*He lifts her veil.*]

Snowdrop (running to KING).

Father!

Courtiers, &c. The Princess!

Evadne. Snowdrop! I am lost!

[*Rushes from room.*]

King. Back from the dead, my

Snowdrop and my own,

Thou has returned—my dead Yolanda's child.

Let me now clasp thee—kiss thee once again.

Take her, Prince Michael, who hast faithful been

Unto her memory, only seen but once.

Take her, whom, as great Heracles did bring

The dead Alcestis, thou hast brought to life.

Michael. Snowdrop, once more before thy father's throne

I hold thy hand and plight to thee my troth,

Honour and faith and loyal love unceasing!

Snowdrop. And I to thee; for now it seems from off me

Evadne's evil influence has passed,

And my dead mother, sweet Yolanda, smiles.

Enter SYLVANA.

Sylvana. Hail! bride and bridegroom. From her wooded home Sylvana comes once more, to greet you well!

And of the false Evadne have no fear, For she has gone for ever from your sight!

Enter DWARFS with flowers.

Dwarf (singing).

O yester eve with blossoms pale
We crowned the maiden who had died,

Red roses 'neath the marriage veil
We bring to-day to crown the bride.

Snowdrop, our little sister thou;
Snowdrop, Prince Michael's dark-haired bride,

We place red roses on thy brow,
Where thou dost stand thy Prince beside.

All (singing).

O red, rose red, the future lies,
As still together on ye press.
May your path be 'neath sunny skies,

And all your ways find happiness.

CURTAIN.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

By HILDA DAWSON

THE first scene of this play takes place in the kitchen of the Merchant's cottage, which may be constructed as a box-scene. Upon the left should be a practicable door and window; the large double flat in the centre being arranged, somewhat after the manner described in the "Fairies," to represent a large, old-fashioned open fireplace, above which various pot-hooks are hanging, one of which may carry a big kettle. If scenery has already been constructed for the "Fairies," it may be utilised without further alteration for the present play. Upon the left should be placed a small cupboard, whilst chairs will be necessary upon either side of the fireplace.

The second scene represents a corner of the Prince's garden, for which the back-cloth described in the "Frozen Palace" will prove suitable. Beneath the tree wing A, on the left, a small flat must be painted to represent a bush of white roses, Fig. 1, a long garden bench being placed in front of it. As the Prince lies behind this bush a certain amount of room will have to be left for him.

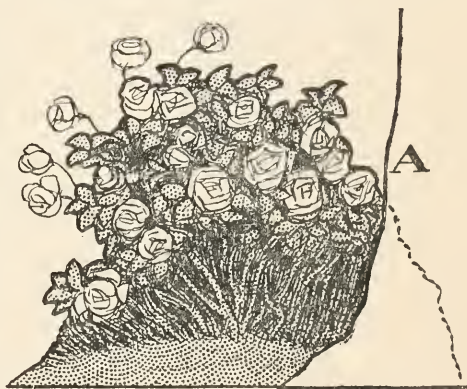


FIG. 1

Upon this flat, amongst the painted blossoms, it will be necessary to fasten one or two sprays of imitation flowers, as during the course of the play the merchant picks a bloom or two. The third and fourth scenes take place in the Prince's garden and, with the exception of a few alterations mentioned in the play, the scenery already described will serve.

COSTUMES

Beauty.—The first costume for Beauty, when she is still a poor and slighted girl, should be very simple. A plain short frock of some dull colour should reach to below her knees, the sleeves terminating in plain linen cuffs, and a Quaker collar made of white material round her neck. Her hair can be plaited in a long tail down her back. Beauty's second costume is that of a wealthy lady, and may consist of a white silk Empire gown suitably trimmed. Her hair, no longer plaited up tightly, should be built up and confined beneath a broad gold fillet. Ropes of pearls and similar jewellery may be decked about her person, to suggest the elevated rank to which she has attained. A handsome addition would be a long silvery gauze scarf draped around the shoulders and over her arms.



FIG. 2

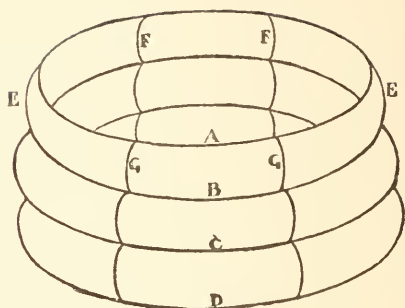


FIG. 3



FIG. 4



FIG. 5

Marigold and Pansy.—The two sisters of Beauty are, throughout the play, dressed elaborately. Their costumes, similar in cut to that of Beauty, should not, however, be quite so richly adorned. To give the appearance of age their faces may be slightly lined, whilst a discontented look can be produced by turning down the corners of the mouth and strengthening the lines of the nostrils.

Prince Auto.—The four wicked Golliwogs, enraged at Prince Auto's motor, have transformed him into a Motor Beast, a slight idea of which is shown in Fig. 2. This is made by winding a strip of white calico some five inches wide round the body over a black jersey. Three imitation tyres made by stretching white canvas over wire hoops, A, B, C, D, joined by the set of six wires E, F, G, in the manner shown in Fig. 3, should encircle the waist, whilst a similar small tyre can be placed on the head. The arms of the jersey will be sufficient to reach to his hands, whilst a pair of blue over-all breeches will suffice for his legs. If desired, instead of the jersey the whole undersuit may be made as a large over-all, this sufficing to cover both arms and legs. Concealed amongst his clothing the Prince should have a small motor horn, or if this be not practicable, an attendant in the wings can sound a proper horn whenever he speaks.

When the happy moment arrives in which the Prince is restored to his natural form, the removal of the motor dress should reveal a costume appropriate to the period of the Princess's dress. This can be made from a study of any of the pictures representing the period of the French Empire

when Napoleon was at the height of his power. It may be briefly described thus:—Beneath a short cloak is a court suit, consisting of an open tunic ornamented with a sash round the waist, white tight-fitting breeches and silk stockings, and court shoes, the whole forming a picture similar to that illustrated in Fig. 4.

The Merchant, Fig. 5, will wear a plain surtout with large pockets, black knee-breeches, and brown woollen stockings. Upon his head should be a powdered bobtail wig, surmounted by a three-cornered hat.

The Four Golliwogs.—A suitable dress for the Golliwogs, Fig. 6, can be made with blue jackets, red trousers, and white shirts. The faces should be black, and black wigs with long hair made after the following fashion should be fitted on the head. Upon a black skullcap, black wool wound into skeins about seven inches in length should be sewn, the other ends being cut in order to make the wool appear somewhat like a mop. When the whole of the skullcap has been covered in this fashion, it will present a realistic representation of a golliwog's head.



FIG. 6

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

CHARACTERS.

BEAUTY, MARIGOLD, AND PANSY,
sisters.

THE MERCHANT, *father to above.*
PRINCE AUTO.

FOUR GOLLIWOGS—FIREFLY, KIT-
TIWIT, BOGEY, AND TOBY.

SCENE I.—*The kitchen of the merchant's cottage. Entrances R. and L. Table centre; cupboard L. Window back of stage, R. Fire burning, R. Chairs on either side of fire, and also one L. of stage.*

TIME.—*Morning.* MARIGOLD is discovered standing at cupboard, L., elaborately dressed.

Marigold. Isn't there *anything* to eat in the house? Not a cake? not even a biscuit? (*Shakes tin and drops it.*) Empty! It's too bad of Beauty! I'm simply starving! It's quite two hours since breakfast, and then I only had two eggs and a chop, and some toast and marmalade and coffee and ham, and a few other little things. I wonder where that child is! (*Crosses R. to door.*) Beauty!

Enter PANSY, L., shivering, dressed elaborately.

Beauty!

Pansy. What a horrible fire! I'm simply frozen! Beauty isn't upstairs, Marigold; she's in the garden. And what *do* you think she's doing? *Digging potatoes!!* (*Crosses R., and sits R. of fire.*) What a very

low mind that girl has! I can scarcely believe she's our sister, though she *is* so pretty.

Marigold (standing by table). I suppose we *are* a good-looking family, but I don't care how low-minded Beauty is as long as we get fed, even if it's only potatoes. (*Takes glass from chateleine and gazes at herself, standing in front of table, centre of stage, while PANSY pokes wildly at the fire.*) I rather like my nose; don't you?

Pansy (a little irritated). Oh, you're always thinking about your nose, just because Horatio couldn't decide whether it was Grecian, Roman, Mediæval, or—or—pug!

Marigold. He *never* said such a thing! He was a darling, and I only wish he would come and see me now! Or *any* of the crowds of admirers we had in the old days. But of course no one worth knowing would come to a *hole* like this! O Pansy—(*sits L. of fire*)—isn't being poor *hateful*!

Pansy. Hateful! Odious! Why, this morning Prince Auto passed me in his motor and he didn't *even* see me! My very best gown on too!

Marigold. It's all father's fault. He ought to have known there'd be a storm, and not have let his ships go out. And now I suppose they are all at the bottom of the sea, while father's just a common labourer.

Pansy. Which we might as well

be for all the fun we get. (BEAUTY *is heard singing outside, L.*) There's Beauty, singing. Now why on earth should she sing?

Marigold. Because she has no ambition, my dear. She has never known the departed glory of our family; her soul does not soar above potatoes!

Pansy. Stuff and nonsense, Marigold! She's only three years younger than we are; she *must* remember how rich we were a few years ago, unless she's a simpleton.

Marigold. Well, perhaps she *is* a simpleton. I dare say she is, Pansy; that's a very good idea of yours. [Yawns.

Enter BEAUTY, L., still singing; carries basket of potatoes. MARIGOLD and PANSY both rush to her.

O Beauty, isn't there anything to *eat* in the house? I'm absolutely starved!

Pansy. O Beauty, *do* come and put some coal on this fire! I'm simply frozen to death!

Beauty (*laughing*). What a couple! Always grumbling! (*Puts basket on table.*) If you're hungry, Marigold, after the breakfast you ate, I think you ought to be exhibited in a show, that's what *I* think; and as to you, Pansy, there's the coal. Why ever don't you put some on?

[*Puts on apron, &c. Stands L. by table. MARIGOLD and PANSY fall back towards fire while BEAUTY speaks.*

Pansy (*aghast, coming to BEAUTY*). Er—*what* did you say?

Beauty. There's the coal—put some on.

Pansy (*sinking into chair, R.*). Mercy, child, you're mad! I put on coal! Think of my hands!

Beauty (*takes coal-box*). What would happen if poor father thought of *his* hands—or I thought of *my* hands?

[*Puts on coal. MARIGOLD and PANSY both gaze at BEAUTY in utter astonishment.*

Marigold (*sitting by fire again; she has lorgnettes, which she can use to great advantage*). What an extraordinary speech, Beauty! You don't seriously suppose Pansy and I are going to do *housework*, do you?

Beauty (*goes to cupboard*). Oh no—indeed I don't!

Marigold. I thought you weren't quite so silly as that. You see *we* can never forget our former life before father lost all his ships and became poor, and we wouldn't dream of sweeping the floors—or making beds—or putting on coal, or anything of that kind. It's different for you. Pansy and I both feel it would be a great pity if you grew up lazy and idle.

Pansy. Quite right, Marigold. You've explained it beautifully.

[PANSY *fetches book from back, and looks at it lazily, sitting as before.*

Beauty (*has brought basin, &c., from cupboard and stands at table, L., peeling potatoes*). Well, you needn't worry, I haven't time to be lazy.

All the same, I quite well remember our dear old home with its ball-room and beautiful gardens. Why do you think I've forgotten it all? But it would be no disgrace to a *queen* to make her own bed, and it does *me* no harm either. And *some one* must do the work now we're so poor. (*Aside.*) Anything's better than sitting about in old finery waiting for the Prince to come. (MARIGOLD *here turns her back on her in disgust.*) But don't let's quarrel. I'm quite happy, and I want every one else to be too. (*Goes towards MARIGOLD.*) Marigold, I wish you'd move your chair over there. I want to come to the fire.

Marigold (*moves*). Oh yes. I'll go and look out of the window; it will be something to do. (*Takes chair R. and drums on pane; BEAUTY hums, and PANSY drops her book and nods sleepily.*) There's that stupid little golliwog Toby up on the hill. Beauty, you really must stop knowing such a person—I don't know *what* people must think. Why, he's not a gentleman!

Beauty (*at table, surprised*). Toby! You don't know what a *dear* he is! He has three very naughty little brothers, but *Toby* is always good! I've heard it brings good luck to have anything to do with him, and Prince Auto knows him, so why shouldn't I?

[BEAUTY *busies herself tidying the table, and prepares to do some cooking.*

Marigold. The Prince! What nonsense! As if he would know a creature like that!

Beauty. Toby's a *great friend* of his. He stops with him sometimes at his other palace ever so far away from here, where he has twenty-five motor-cars. I know him too; one day Toby and I went for a walk with him, and we had such fun.

Marigold (*crossing from window to L.*). You know the Prince! I expect he was trying to get an introduction to Pansy and me, really.

Beauty. I don't think he was. He didn't mention either of you. Now, what do you two want for dinner?

Marigold (*starts and shouts*). Dinner!

Pansy (*waking with a start*). Dinner!

[Both MARIGOLD and PANSY *start forward and catch hold of BEAUTY, one on either side.*

Marigold. Turtle-soup, of course.

Pansy. Hors-d'œuvre first, stupid.

Marigold. Salmon.

Pansy. Mayonnaise and cucumber.

Marigold. Chicken done in cream!

Pansy. Asparagus!

Marigold. Oyster patties.

Pansy. Grouse!—

Marigold. And banana salad with it!

Beauty. Oh stop—stop—*do stop!*

[*Very troubled—with her hands to her ears.*

Marigold. My dear, we've only just begun. Lamb and mint sauce—

Pansy. Chocolate-cream—Charlotte Russe!

Marigold. Strawberries! Merin-gues!

Pansy. Mince-pies—ices!

Marigold. Anchovies.

Pansy. And plenty of butlers——

Marigold. On toast.

Pansy (coming forward, R.). Butlers on toast! Really, *Marigold*, have you forgotten that butlers stand on the floor?

Marigold (coming forward, L.). *Anchovies*, *Pansy*, I said. I do know the difference between servants and savouries. What a dinner!

[*MARIGOLD* sinks into chair, L. During this dialogue *BEAUTY* grows more and more distracted, and finally bursts into tears.

Pansy. The only thing is, are they all in season? *Hullo!* *Beauty's* crying! What's the matter?

Beauty (sobbing). Oh, I do think you're unkind. Father has no money for these things. Besides, you know I can only make suet-puddings!

Marigold (indignant). Good gracious! What on earth did you ask us for then? But don't cry so, *Beauty*, we'll eat the pudding; won't we, *Pansy*?

Pansy. Of course we will. You'll do better in time, and *Marigold* and I will give you a cookery-book for a birthday present next week if you're good. Still, you oughtn't to have raised our hopes.

[A loud knock is heard at door, L.; they all start.

Beauty (drying her eyes). Who can that be?

Marigold (titivating her hair). Perhaps it's *Horatio* come at last!

Pansy (titivating). Or the Prince, to see me! (They sit stiffly in their

chairs, and spend some minutes in arranging themselves.) Open the door, *Beauty*. [*BEAUTY* goes L.

Beauty (opens door). It's *Toby*! With a letter!

Enter TOBY, L., with huge letter.

MARIGOLD and *PANSY* most disappointed until they hear of letter.

Toby (comes to front of stage; bows elaborately). A letter from over the seas, ladies, for your father.

[*BEAUTY* L., and *MARIGOLD* and *PANSY* R.; they crowd round him.

Marigold. What can it be? I hope it's an invitation for us.

Pansy. Yes, it's sure to be.

Beauty (looking towards window, crosses R.). Oh, I wish father were in! I don't think it can be a bill! *Toby*, do you know what it is? Did it come by post?

Toby (puts letter on table). No; it came by ME! [*Bows again.*

Beauty. Then I'm sure it's something nice. Look, there is father coming down the hill. Come and meet him, *Toby*.

[*PANSY* goes and looks out of window.

Toby. Good morning, ladies.

[*Exeunt BEAUTY and TOBY, L.*

Marigold (L.). Are you superstitious, *Pansy*?

Pansy (comes R.). I don't know. Why?

Marigold. Well, suppose it's true about that *Golliwog* bringing good luck? Perhaps we're going to be rich again! I shall buy twelve

pounds of chocolate-creams at once! and *heaps* of new hats!

Pansy. O Marigold, how lovely! I shall order a satin gown for *every* day in the year!

Enter MERCHANT and BEAUTY, L.

O father, quick! Open it, do!

[PANSY and MARIGOLD rush at him with letter. BEAUTY takes his bag and brings chair, centre stage. BEAUTY stands L.; MARIGOLD and PANSY R.]

Merchant (sits). This is a most uncommon-looking letter. Bring me my spectacles, Beauty dear.

Marigold. Oh, do hurry up, father. What a time you take!

[BEAUTY brings glasses and kneels by his side, L.]

Merchant. Thank you, my child. (*Opens letter.*) Oh, my children! Beauty! (*BEAUTY starts up.*) It can't be true! But, yes—it says so—my ships are not lost after all. We shall be poor no longer!

[Rises.]

Marigold and Pansy (clasping each other's hands). Hurrah! hurrah!

[*They talk to each other in great excitement.*]

Beauty. And you won't have to work in the fields any more, father! I am glad.

Merchant. But I must be off at once to see about it all.

Beauty. Won't you have dinner first?

Merchant. No. I must go without to-day. Good-bye, my dears. I may be away some little time.

Beauty. Just wait while I put some things into a bag for you. [*Exit* R.]

Merchant. Aren't you girls going to stop whispering and wish me good-bye?

Marigold (to PANSY). My dear, we'll go to Peter Robinson's; I've seen it there for five and eleven, three, double-width. Oh, good-bye, father—hurry up back. Do bring me a cartload of Turkish delight, I'm so hungry! and I've got nothing decent to wear, so will you buy me a rope of pearls as well, about as long as—that. [*Stretches her arms.*]

Pansy. And, father, I want a diamond tiara—

Enter BEAUTY, R.

A big one—outsize.

Merchant (sighs). Very well, my dears. I'll see what I can do. What shall I get you, Beauty?

Beauty. Oh, nothing, father; but come home safe and well as soon as you can. [*Crosses* L.]

Marigold. Little goose!

Pansy. How silly!

Merchant. Oh, you must have something if the others do.

Beauty. Well, then, bring me a rose—a white rose, father; that's what I should like best.

Merchant (going L.) I'll try. Good-bye, my children.

Marigold and Pansy. Good-bye, don't forget my pearls—my tiara.

Beauty. I'm coming to the gate with you.

[*Exeunt* MERCHANT and BEAUTY, L.]

Marigold (striking an attitude).

What will Horatio say to a gown of violet satin laced with green, and a train stretching to *there*! [Points.

Pansy. My dear, I shall call on Prince Auto in crimson velvet with two trains—one each side.

TABLEAU AND CURTAIN.

SCENE II.—*A corner of the PRINCE'S garden—full of flowers—castle seen in the distance. Bush of white roses L., with seat in front. Seat also L. Entrances R. and L.; PRINCE lies behind bush, disguised as Motor-beast.*

Enter TOBY, R., wringing his hands.

Toby (looking about). He's not here either! Then he's lost! My dear friend, Prince Auto, lost! (Sits R.) But I won't cry—(sniffs)—it's so babyish; I'll scream instead! Oh! I believe my wicked little brothers have done something to him. Ah, why was I born so good and they so bad? I heard them threaten dreadful things if he passed them again in a motor-car—as if he could stop the dust flying in their faces!

Prince (faintly). Toby! Toby!

[A motor-horn sounds as an echo.

Toby. The Prince's voice! And his car. Where can they be?

Prince. Here. [Horn again.

Toby (rushes about wildly, and at last finds PRINCE; falls back in alarm). Oh! oh! Are you Prince Auto?

Prince. Yes, Toby. [Horn.

Toby. Is this what Firefly has done to you?

Prince. Yes, Toby. [Horn.

Toby (stamping). How dare he!

Can't you pull these things off? Let me try. [Begins to pull.

Prince. Oh don't! You hurt horribly. [Horn very vigorous.

Toby. Please stop that noise.

Prince. Can't; it's part of your dear little brothers' scheme. (Horn.) Whenever I talk, it happens. [Horn.

Toby. Oh, don't talk then. I'll do the talking, and you shake your head or nod it. (Sits L.) Now what can I do? If I could keep Firefly and the others from this garden for a whole day and night the spell would be broken, I know; but that will be impossible. Kittiwit's everywhere, and if he's engaged, Bogey and Firefly won't be! Oh dear me!

[Noises heard outside, R. TOBY rises, and draws his wooden sword.

Prince. They're coming! Hide, or there'll be such a row! [Horn.

Toby. Not I! (Strikes a threatening attitude, L.) Halt! (The three GOLLIWOGS rush in R. and laugh wildly on seeing TOBY.) Halt! I say! I guard the Prince, and you pass here at peril of your lives!

Firefly (comes forward, R.; three GOLLIES draw swords). Ho! ho! you want to fight, do you? Come on, then!

Toby. I don't approve of fighting, but this is an exception.

Firefly. Most exceptional! Kittiwit and Bogey, go and sit on his lordship; we don't want him interfering.

Prince. Oh! (KITTIWIT and BOGEY sit heavily.) Oh!

[Horn. FIREFLY and TOBY prepare to fight.

Kittiwit (most excited). O Bogey, it's a real fight.

Bogey (solemnly). It's nothing to laugh at!

Firefly. Now then, young man, I'm going to kill you!

Toby. So am I!

[*They fight most vigorously; finally TOBY drives FIRE-FLY into corner, R.*]

Firefly. Help! help! *Kittiwit!* *Bogey!*

[*KITTIWIT and BOGEY rush up, and all three belabour TOBY, whom they get to the ground, centre front.*]

Toby. This comes of going against my principles. Three against one isn't fair!

Firefly. All's fair in love and war, and this is war. (*Brandishes sword.*) Shall we cut off his head?

Bogey. Certainly!

Kittiwit. We'd better not! He's our only good relation, and we might miss him.

Firefly. That's true. Rise, Toby; but don't imagine we're knighting you. Your life is spared, and you may continue to hold your unique position in our family, but learn not to interfere in future. (*TOBY rises and bandages himself over the eye.*) This gentleman is *our* property until some fair maiden kisses him and promises to be his bride—without knowing who he really is, or anything about us. I think he'll belong to us a very long time; don't you, *Kittiwit?*

[*TOBY sits R., very disconsolate.*]

Kittiwit. Yes; no one will want to marry him.

Bogey. I should think not—oh dear me!

Firefly. Now, we'll have a little chat with his lordship. (*They sit; FIREFLY on seat L., BOGEY and KITTIWIT on floor by his side.*) Won't you come and sit with us?

Prince. No thanks. I'd rather sit here. [*Horn.*]

Firefly. Oh, we'll stop that favourite music of yours for a little while. *Kittiwit*, remove it. (*KITTIWIT takes horn and returns to seat on ground.*) Of course you didn't know what powerful enemies you had, did you?

Prince. No; I've only seen you once before, and I can't think why you should be my enemies! I might reasonably be annoyed with you for treating my garden like a playground.

Firefly. That's an uncalled-for remark! However, let it pass; and I'll tell you why we're your enemies. Firstly, your motor-cars—

Kittiwit. Secondly, your motor-cars—

Bogey. Thirdly, your motor-cars—

Prince (rises, and walks to centre). Well, there's no doubt in your minds evidently! Why don't you like my cars?

Firefly. Because they smell horrible, they make a horrid noise, stop us thinking, and aren't a bit of use.

Kittiwit and Bogey. Not a bit!

Prince. How's that?

Firefly (jumping up in excitement). You've never given one of us a ride!

Toby (jumps up too). Please to remember the Prince couldn't. You know you've always been invisible.

Firefly. I know that! It doesn't alter the fact, does it?

Prince. Oh dear, we motorists are expected to do some strange things, but must we carry invisible Golliwogs?

Firefly. And there's another thing—one day you drove right through our house and garden!

Prince. It's very strange that you did not claim compensation. Where is your house? Where do you come from? I don't know!

Firefly. Ah! I wonder!

Kittiwit (rising). I wonder!

Bogey (rising). So do I!

All Golliwogs sing. Where do we come from? Nobody knows!

Down from the moon, perhaps, when the wind blows—

Or do we hide, deep in a well?

No one but US knows, and US won't tell.

[*Repeated, with PRINCE, and all dance, with swords.*]

Firefly. How well we all sing and dance, don't we?

Prince. Yes, really we're like old friends. Do let's be friends, Firefly. You shall have rides *every day*, and a new house and garden too, if you'll only release me.

Kittiwit and Bogey. Oh no! no!

Prince (sings, or recites).

Gollies, dear Gollies, I'm still at a loss

To know why you all are so dreadfully cross—

Do come and make friends—give me freedom to roam,
And I'll drive in a mail-cart straight away home.

[*The GOLLIES turn their backs on PRINCE, much annoyed.*]

Gollies, dear Gollies, have pity on me,

And let me go back as Prince Auto to tea;

In a mail-cart I *don't* think you'll find any smell,

So please come and take off this horrible spell.

Toby. Oh, *do* listen to him, Firefly.

Firefly. No such thing! Please don't appeal to my soft side; I haven't got one! Why, the fun's only just begun! (*Looks R.*) Here's some one coming! It's that silly old man you looked after last night, Toby. I wish *we'd* met him first—we'd have turned him into a fat frog.

Kittiwit and Bogey. Yes, like this.

[*They hop like frogs.*]

Toby (horrified). Beauty's father a frog! Oh, how glad I am I found him!

Firefly. Now come along, brothers; we must go! We'll take his horn with us, Kittiwit, and alter it; it doesn't make half enough noise—(*blows it very hard*)—does it? Good-bye, sweet creature—entertain your visitor, won't you? And *please* don't forget to ask us to your wedding! Come along, Toby.

[*Takes hold of TOBY.*]

Kittiwit. And send us some cake!

Bogey. With lots of sugar and almond paste!

Three Golliwogs. Ta-ta! Ta-ta!

[TOBY, weeping, is dragged away by the three. *Exeunt L.*

Prince. Firefly! Kittiwit! Bogey! Oh, you little horrors! And Toby's gone too! I'm in a rage, a fury, a tempest of tempers! I'll kill any one who comes near me! Ah, here comes Mr. Would-have-been-a-Frog!

[*Hides behind rose-tree.*

Enter MERCHANT, R. Sits R.

Merchant. Will this wonderful journey never end? I *must* be in fairyland. Last night, when I thought I was lost, to be suddenly transported to a palace and waited on hand and foot! Or am I asleep? No! I am wide-awake, with a string of pearls and a diamond tiara in my pocket, and looking for a white rose for my youngest daughter! I can't go home without one, and yet where *can* I find such a rare treasure? In this lovely garden, perhaps. (*Puts on glasses and rises.*) Ah, now what are those blossoms over there? (*Crosses L.*) White roses! I *am* a lucky man.

[*Stretches out to pick one, when PRINCE flies at him.*

Prince. No, you're *not* a lucky man! You're *not*. I'll *kill* you if you pick my flowers!

Merchant. A dragon! As I live!

Prince. As you *die*, you mean!

[*They both stand centre.*

Merchant (on his knees, R.). I implore you to listen to me. I was only taking a flower for my favourite daughter; she asked me to bring her a white rose when I went home.

Prince. What do I care for your favourite daughter? Be gone from my garden or I'll kill you.

Merchant (rising). You would care if you knew her—*every one* loves Beauty!

Prince. Beauty! Is that the Beauty I once knew, I wonder? (*To MERCHANT.*) Has she fair hair and pink cheeks, and does she do all the work for her two lazy sisters in a cottage at the foot of a hill?

Merchant. Yes, yes! But how *can* a creature like this know her?

Prince (picks a rose). Here, then, take her this rose, and send her to me.

Merchant. Oh no; that is impossible!

Prince. Very well, then; I shall keep *you* as my prisoner and you'll never see her again, your favourite daughter!

Merchant. O Beauty, my child, what shall I do? She is waiting for me, and she will die of grief if she waits in vain! But if I go home only to send *her* here!

Prince. Well, if you do, I promise not to harm a hair of her head. I look a lot worse than I am, and you need have *no* fear for her.

Merchant (after a pause). I'll send her! Somehow I trust you. (*Goes R.*) You won't separate us for ever?

Prince. Oh no; but hurry—hurry—send her quickly!

Merchant (going R.). What will she say? [*Exit R.*

Prince (stalks up and down). Now's my chance! But will she be terrified of me? I wish I could see what I

look like! A sort of mad advertisement of a motor garage, I suppose. But oh, I'll take such care of her, and love her so tenderly, that her heart will melt for me; then she will kiss me and promise to be my bride, and she never, never shall regret it! Beauty! Beauty! Come as fast as you can, and together we can defy an *army* of Golliwogs!

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.—*The garden, as before.*

A year later. BEAUTY dressed as a Princess sits L., sewing. Soft music is heard.

Beauty. I wonder if father will ever have these handkerchiefs I've made him? It seems such a long time since I saw him. Why, it's over a year ago that he said good-bye to me, and ever since I've lived here just like a Princess with my poor Beastie, and seen no one else, except Toby and his strange brothers. Oh, how frightened I was at first! But now I should be quite sad if I had to go away again, only I *should* like to see father! Of course he is very rich now; how glad Marigold and Pansy must be! I do hope they take care of him. It isn't *money* that makes people happy! Ah, here comes my Beastie, and I *believe* it's Saturday. If it is, he'll ask me to marry him—we always end the week like that! Oh dear! I don't think I *can*!

Enter PRINCE, R.

Prince. Still sewing handkerchiefs

for your father, Beauty? You must have a great many ready by now!

Beauty. Yes, indeed. I've made two or three every week since I came!

Prince. Well, little lady, I hope he'll have hay-fever, or a *very* bad cold, or he'll never be able to use them!

Beauty. Oh, *please* don't say that! Do you know, sometimes I think father might be ill, or lonely without me. Will you one day let me go home and see?

Prince. Oh, I can't spare you, Beauty! You mustn't leave me! I should die immediately! He has Marigold and Pansy to look after him!

Beauty. But they might forget him! And I don't see why you should die; I would come back.

Prince. No, no; *you* would forget me and never come back, and I *should* die! I'm not at all well now! I often have a most dreadful pain *here*. I think it's appendicitis!

Beauty. Oh no! not *there*! That's indigestion!

Prince (*a trifle hurt*). It's either appendicitis or *heart-disease*. And talking of *hearts*, Beauty—

Beauty. It is Saturday. I thought so.

Prince. *Won't* you marry me? If only you would say "Yes," how happy we would be! Or are you still frightened of me?

Beauty. Oh no; the only thing that makes me jump *now* is that dreadful noise you make sometimes—like hundreds of motor-cars!

Prince. Ah yes! I know. It makes my head *split*, and it will grow worse and worse! But if you'd marry me I'd never do it again!

Beauty (starts up in surprise). Wouldn't you *really*? I'm very fond of you, Beastie, and you *are* so good to me, but I don't think I want to marry *any one* just yet. Ask me *next Saturday*!

Prince (flings himself on seat, R.). Oh, you always say that! But what can I expect? I'm a great ugly old brute, and you're a dear pretty little Beauty!

Beauty (crosses to him). You're *not* a brute; you're the kindest and best of beasties, but girls can't always make up their minds, can they? Oh, look, here come the Golliwogs.

Enter three bad GOLLIES, L.

Firefly (mockingly bowing). If you don't at first succeed, Try, try again.

Kittiwit. Try, try again.

Bogey. Try, try again.

[PRINCE stalks angrily to and fro, and BEAUTY goes back L., sewing.]

Firefly (R.). Don't let us disturb you—that *would* be a pity!

Beauty. You're not to worry my Beastie to-day! He doesn't feel at all well.

Kittiwit. We *never* worry him.

Firefly (comes forward to BEAUTY; KITTIWIT and BOGEY follow him). Oh, he's only cutting his teeth, I expect; besides, we came to talk to you!

Prince. You shan't worry *her*, so I warn you! [Stands by BEAUTY.]

Firefly. You ought to go home, Madam Beauty; your father is very ill! (BEAUTY starts up.) Madam Marigold is very ill, Madam Pansy is very ill—all the little animals are very ill.

[BEAUTY wrings her hands, &c.]

Prince. Don't believe *one* word he says, Beauty; it's only to take you away from me——

Beauty. No, I *don't* believe you, Firefly; you *never* speak the truth!

Kittiwit. Never!

Bogey. Never!

Firefly. How *dare* you, Kittiwit and Bogey! Now you've spoilt my plan! Don't you see she'll say "Yes" to him soon? And then where shall *we* be? I thought you were sensible Golliwogs, but I find you're only *ordinary men*.

[Folds his arms and stalks R., followed by KITTIWIT and BOGEY.]

Bogey. We were only pretending, Firefly.

Kittiwit. Let's have a meeting, and you'll see!

[They all sit on the floor R., heads together, whispering. Enter MARIGOLD eating a large piece of sugar-cake—box of chocolate under her arm, and PANSY R., and TOBY unobserved, with his fists in his eyes.]

Beauty (starting). Marigold! and Pansy! How did you get here? It's not bad news of father, is it?

Marigold. Bless you, no, child; he's all right, I suppose! We've come to rescue you! [*GOLLIES all stare.*]

Pansy. I hope to goodness there's a keeper somewhere near at hand—does it bite? [*Points to PRINCE.*]

Prince. Madam, I can bite.

Marigold and Pansy. Oh! oh!

Marigold. Come home directly, Beauty; it's not safe to stop a minute near this creature!

Pansy. Yes, come along; we've put on all our old clothes for this journey, and altogether been most uncomfortable. You *might* show your gratitude by being quick instead of taking no notice whatever!

Beauty. Why do you want me to come back? I'm very happy, and if father's quite happy too, then I'm going to stop here! [*GOLLIES hiss.*]

Prince. Bravo, Beauty!

Marigold. It's just because you've no work to do and have managed to get a pretty frock to wear! Not that it suits you! I should look far better in it! I tell you, you *must* come home! We can't manage the castle; how do we know what to order for dinner?

Beauty. I thought you knew that very well!

Pansy. Besides, Marigold and I want you for a chaperon! Prince Auto may be home any day now, and we're going to make a bee-line for him.

Prince (aside). Candid, anyway.

Beauty. I'm not coming! You can make bee-lines without me. [*Sits L.*] How did you know I was here?

Marigold. Those black-headed imps over there told us, but we shall not risk our lives a second time! Come, Pansy.

[*Go towards R., PRINCE follows. GOLLIES very distressed.*]

Prince. Go along, make a bee-line out of this garden—there's no honey here for you! (*MARIGOLD and PANSY shriek wildly and rush off R.; TOBY stands centre, fists still in eyes.*) Why, here's Toby! What's the matter?

[*Brings him up, centre.*]

Toby (sniffing hard). I'm not crying! But it isn't true.

Beauty. What isn't true?

Toby (falls at her feet). Your father is very ill, and calling for you day and night!

Beauty (starting up). O Toby, Toby! how dreadful!

[*Three GOLLIES delighted.*]

Firefly. At last she's off!

Kittiwit. She shall never come back again!

Bogey. Never!

Beauty. You'll let me go directly—won't you, Beastie?

Prince (R.). O Beauty, I shall die! I can't spare you!

Beauty (crosses to PRINCE; crying). Don't say that! I'll come back, I promise you! Please, please let me go!

Prince (picks rose). Take this rose; it may help you to think of me, but I shall die! I can't live without you!

[*Sits in a dejected heap, R.*]

Beauty (leans over him). Good-bye,

Beastie dear ! It's not for very long.

[*Kisses him.* GOLLYS *shriek.*

BEAUTY goes L. TOBY follows. *Exeunt.*

Kittiwit. She's kissed him !

Firefly. But she's gone, and she's sure to forget him and never come back again. Ah ! we've won, you see ! You're still an old bachelor.

Song and dance, in which PRINCE does not move.

Now that Beauty's gone, and left you lonely,

You will wonder what on earth to do,
For it isn't likely in this country

There's another girl will care for You.

Up and down the roadside you will wander,

Cottage maidens desperately you'll woo ;
Frightened, they will scamper, helter-skelter ;

Nobody will want to marry You.

Chorus.

Good-bye, Mister Bachelor—

You belong to us.

Though p'rhaps you are feeling sore,
Is it any good to make a silly Fuss ?

Farewell, dear perpetual Beast,
No more you'll motor round.

In the morning when you're waking
You will find your heart is breaking,
In salt tears you'll be drowned !

CURTAIN.

SCENE IV.—*The garden again. A few months later. The stage should be darkened.*

TIME.—*The evening. The PRINCE lies L., half hidden by the rose-bush on the ground. TOBY on scat R., sobbing. The three bad GOLLYS*

wogs stand peeping silently behind the trees, holding lanterns, or long stems of grass, with tiny lights at end. Music.

Firefly (moves forward, then stops).

Ssh ! Don't make a sound ! Creep.

[*KITTIWIT and BOGEY step forward.*

Bogey. Is he dead ?

Firefly. Hush ! (*They all move towards PRINCE, and finally arrange themselves round him.*) If only Beauty will forget him a little longer, he will die !

Kittiwit. But then we shall never have a ride, *Firefly !*

Bogey. Oh ! . don't let him die quite, *Firefly.*

Firefly. It's much more comfortable to be quite dead than nearly, you sillies. He's our enemy, and that's enough ! Hush ! he's moving ! Sch—— !

Enter BEAUTY, L., crying.

Beauty. My Beastie ! Oh, my poor Beastie ! Where are you ? (*Crosses to TOBY.*) Toby, I've come, and I can't find him anywhere in the palace. I forgot him because of father ; but when I found this white rose he gave me all withered and dying, then I remembered. And now perhaps I shall never see him again ! Toby ! Do help me !

Toby. Look by the rose-bush, Beauty.

Beauty. Oh, I'm frightened to ; I thought he might be there. (*Whispers.*) Is he dead ?

Toby. I—I—think so.

Beauty (turns and looks L., sees

GOLLIES). Go away! You horrid—horrid—little black things! Go away from my poor Beastie! (*She turns them all away R. and kneels by PRINCE'S side.*) But *he's not* dead! Open your eyes, Beastie, and see! Beauty's come back to you! Beastie dear, it's Saturday, and if you'll only wake up and ask me that question once more, I'll say "Yes" this time.

[PRINCE sits up. BEAUTY stands L.; TOBY centre.

Firefly. Oh, listen to her. We're going to lose, Kittiwit.

[*They stare with eyes and mouths wide open.*

Prince. Beauty! You've come back! Did you say you'd marry me?

Beauty. Yes, Beastie!

[PRINCE rises.

Firefly. The spell is breaking! Quick—or it will fall on us.

[*They rush to PRINCE and tear off his disguise, and he stands revealed as PRINCE AUTO—then they hide. TOBY jumps up with joy. The stage should now be lighted brightly.*

Beauty. Oh! oh! It's Prince Auto!

[*Turns away L., very shyly.*

PRINCE follows her.

Prince. Beauty, don't turn away from me. You've saved my life, and I want to thank you. The Gollies had cast a spell over me until some maiden promised to marry me, but you're not going to desert me now it's over, are you? I don't want to be a Prince again if you are.

[PRINCE holds her hand, centre.

Beauty. Oh no, Beastie, I mean Prince Auto. If you want me, I want to stay. But it's all so wonderful!

[PRINCE kisses her hands.

Prince. Firefly! Kittiwit! Bogey! Where are you all? Come out! (*Three GOLLIES' heads anxiously peer round corners.*) Come out and shake hands.

[*They come, but hold hands behind them.*

Firefly. Aren't you going to beat us—

[*Falls on knees.*

Kittiwit. And put us in chains—

[*On knees.*

Bogey. And throw us in a dungeon?

[*On knees.*

Prince. Oh, no—no—rather not. Come and shake hands. I'm very grateful to you three. (*GOLLIES come forward.*) I know we motor men are terribly thoughtless and often forget other people's feelings, but anyway I *never* will again, and we'll all be the best of friends. Just think! It's through you that Beauty has promised to be my bride! (*Takes her hand.*) I never can thank you enough for that.

Toby. Oh, look! Here comes your family, Beauty!

Enter MERCHANT, MARIGOLD, and PANSY, R.

Marigold. The Prince!

Pansy. Prince Auto!

[*They curtsey.*

Merchant. My dear sir, did you rescue my daughter from that strange creature? Have you killed him?

Prince. Yes—he's quite dead, thank you! And Beauty has done

something better still — she has promised to marry me!

Marigold. Dear, dear, dear!

Pansy. Well, he'll be our brother, anyway! [*They stand together, R.*]

Marigold. And he's sure to have dinner-parties sometimes!

Merchant. I am delighted! You both look so happy it makes your old father happy too; and you, Beauty, deserve all the happiness that is in store for you.

Beauty. Thank you, father.

Kittiwit. You'll give us a ride, won't you?

Prince. Oh yes—lots and lots.

All the Gollies. And we'll all come to the wedding!

[*They sing, and all join in chorus.*]

TUNE.—“*We won't go home till morning.*”

Oh, there's going to be a wedding
Of Beauty and the Beast!

An awfully pretty wedding—
We'll all be at the feast.

The Bride will be in silver—
The Prince in cloth of gold.

Gollies (alone). And us will have new garments too,

If they haven't all been sold!

All. Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!
There'll be a lovely wedding
And us will all be there!

All. And now our play is ended
We'll wish you all good night,
And hope you'll all agree with us
It's been a pretty sight!

Please listen to the moral,
It's really very clear—

We say to those with motor-cars,
Remember “Shank's Mare.”

Good night! Good health! Good-
bye!

Good luck to every one—
And p'raps some day we'll come again
To see what good we've done!

All. Good night.

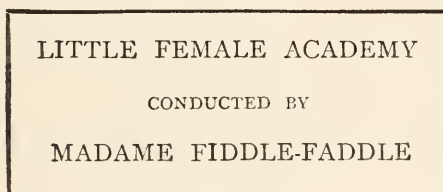
[*Kiss their hands.*]

CURTAIN AND TABLEAU.

THE LITTLE FEMALE ACADEMY

By OLIVE ALLEN

THE first scene of this play takes place outside a school-house, but, as it is so very short, considerable trouble will be saved by arranging it in front of the curtain before this latter rises for the second scene. Upon one side a placard with the following legend may be placed :—



The second scene should be arranged as a "box-scene," to represent the inside of the schoolroom, the walls being painted white, with a gay dado. In the back

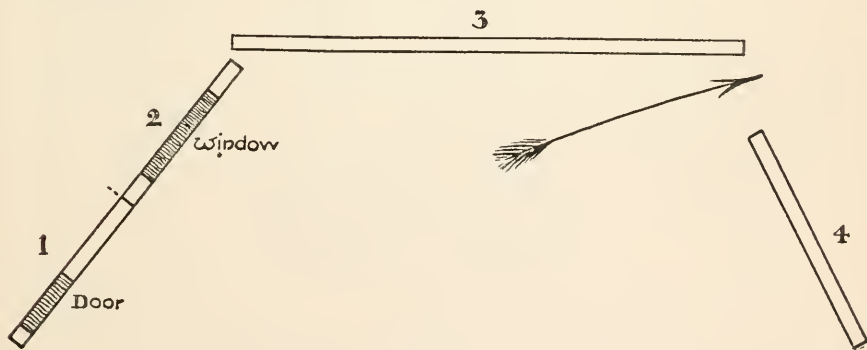


FIG. I

flat must be a practicable window painted with small leaded panes, whilst in the right and left flats should be practicable doors to allow of exits and entrances. Upon the walls can be hung maps of Palestine and Italy, whilst forms and a desk will complete the scene.

Scene III. is placed in the courtyard in front of the school, and the flats already used may be reversed and placed as shown in Fig. I. The door and the window flats must be painted to represent red brick-work, the door itself being a deep green. The plain flat must be reversed and laid on its side—No. 3 in the figure—being coloured to resemble a brick wall. The large flat

No. 4, will represent the side of a house, and must be placed in such a position that the entrance to the stage can be made between it and No. 3, as indicated by the arrow.

Scenes IV. and V. both take place in the schoolroom, which must, of course, be arranged as before.

COSTUMES

Miss Tom Tomkins.—The modern girl should wear a plain school frock, or a jersey and skirt. Beneath a straw hat her hair should be smoothed down and



FIG. 2



FIG. 3



FIG. 4

plaited into a pig-tail. With a hocky-stick under her arm, and good stout shoes on her feet, Miss Tom Tomkins will provide a striking contrast to the wonderfully dressed young ladies of the Academy.

Miss Tomasina Tomkins, and her six fellow pupils, should be dressed after the old-fashioned style shown in Fig. 2. Her low-necked bodice can have sleeves to the elbows, with undersleeves reaching to her hands, which are covered with mittens. Her flounced skirt should be spread out over small crinoline irons reaching to just below the knee, her pantelettes or drawers ending some distance below. These can be either gathered or left straight and scalloped. The delicate little slippers are kept in place by narrow black ribbon crossing over the instep and bound round above the ankle. With a large poke-bonnet

and a dainty parasol, Miss Tomkins's costume will be complete. As already mentioned, the dresses of her friends may be based upon the same pattern. The smaller girls, however, may have their arms bare, whilst minor differences in the shapes of the hats and colours of the dresses can be introduced at pleasure.

Miss Prim.—The school-teacher's dress, illustrated in Fig. 3, should be of the simplest type. A muslin or print frock with three flounces upon the skirt should have short sleeves and a low neck. White undersleeves with a plain wrist-band, and a low white collar fastened with a large brooch, are all that are needed to finish her dress. Miss Prim's hair should be parted in the middle and brushed down smoothly over the ears, being fastened into a knot at the back.

Master Algernon Augustus Tomkins.—The schoolboy dress shown in Fig. 4 can be very simply made with a large blouse fastened with a belt, and broad check breeches coming to within a couple of inches of his ankles. The plain white collar around his neck is ornamented with a huge bow, whilst the large cap with big peak and check band (not unlike that of the Scots Guards) is ornamented with a long tassel.

Great care should be exercised, in presenting this play, to maintain the prim and proper behaviour of the old-world girls, as the object is to show the contrast between them and their descendants of the present day.

THE LITTLE FEMALE ACADEMY

CHARACTERS.

MISS TOM TOMKINS, *a Modern Schoolgirl.*

MISS THOMASINA TOMKINS

MISS PAMELA PEACOCK

MISS SUSAN SIMPER

MISS PRISCILLA PLUME

MISS MARIA PLOD

MISS ANN APPLEBLOSSOM

MISS LUCY LOCKET

MISS PRIM, *School-teacher.*

MASTER ALGERNON AUGUSTUS TOMKINS,
Schoolboy.

*Old-
fashioned
Schoolgirls.*

School bell must have rung ages ago. Haven't done my Algebra. Lost my old *Elementa Latina* down the piano. I *hope* they have a practice before prep—(*swinging her hockey-stick*)—then I'll show them who ought to be centre-half in the first eleven!

[*Knocks on door. Hears multiplication table chanted within.*]

Hullo! That sounds rummy!

CURTAIN for a few minutes.

SCENE I.—*Outside a Schoolhouse.*
Over the door in large letters,
"LITTLE FEMALE ACADEMY."

Enter TOM TOMKINS, attired in short skirt, with books and hockey-stick. Clock strikes.

Tom. Goodness! It's nine o'clock.

SCENE II.—*Enters schoolroom. Girls standing in row, saying tables. MISS PRIM seated at desk. They suddenly observe TOM and all raise their hands.*

Tom. Well! I must go and see an oculist! (*Rubs eyes.*) No, they're still there. Gracious me, look at their clothes!

Miss Prim. Young ladies, be seated. (*To TOM.*) Madame Fiddle-Faddle did not acquaint me with the fact that a new scholar was expected this morning. Young lady, will you kindly make your name known to us?

Tom. Tom Tomkins, my name is; but I say——

Soft Shocked Chorus of Young Ladies. Tom!

Miss Prim. Miss Tomkins, I cannot but believe that you prevaricate—only a *male* could be called Tom.

Tom. I don't know what pre—what's-his-name means—but my name's Tom. I believe there were some twiddles on to the end of it when I was christened, but nobody has time to say them. I don't know what this class is, but, if it's Latin, I've lost my book——

S. S. Chorus. Latin!

Tom. And I didn't have time to write out my Hygiene because I was playing hockey yesterday, and——

S. S. Chorus. Hygiene! Hockey!

Miss Prim. Young ladies, *silence!* Miss Tomkins, kindly take your seat at the end of the form. I will make no comments upon your curious and most unmaidenly attire, for I have no doubt that Madame Fiddle-Faddle will herself make it her duty to inform your parents of the necessity of garments more suitable to a young female.

Tom (*aside as she sits down*). Good gracious!

[*Looks with horror at long row of pantelettes.*]

Miss Prim. Miss Tomkins, your deportment is sadly unladylike. Try to sit upright with the elbows in. Hold the head up; no, do not stare boldly, but lower the eyelids with a *modest* air. *Never* cross the lower limbs!

S. S. Chorus. No, *never* cross the lower limbs!

Miss Prim. Silence, young ladies! We will now proceed with a few questions on general subjects. Miss Peacock, you will kindly give me the names of the seven planets.

Peacock. There seven prim'ry planets are

Revolving round the sun,
And perhaps you'll be surprised to hear

That this our earth is one.

Merc'ry, Venus, then our world,
Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn
And Herschel, with their moons,
are whirl'd

Around the sun 'tis certain.

Miss Prim. Excellent, Miss Peacock. Now, perhaps, Miss Simper will tell us something about the planet Jupiter.

Simper. Jupiter larger is by far
Than any of the others are;
Besides, its distance from the sun
Is miles, four hundred million.

Miss Prim. That will do. And now, Miss Tomkins, will you discourse on the Moon?

Tom. The moon?—well, it's round

—no, it isn't, it's sometimes like half a cheese. There's a man in it—no, there isn't—at least the rhyme says there is and dull people say there isn't—and—and—(*growing fidgety*)—the moon's—the moon——

Miss Prim. Thank you, Miss Tomkins. I think Miss Plod will give me a better account.

Plod. Philosophers think that the moon is a world
Which in twenty-nine days round its axis is whirl'd,
And thus the inhabitants, some of them say,
Have a very long night and a very long day.

The earth is to them what the moon is to us,
Only very much larger and therefore more use.

And, while we are viewing the moon full of mirth,
They may be admiring the beautiful earth.

Of miles 'tis two hundred and forty——

Miss Prim. Enough! I will now ask Miss Thomasina Tomkins to give me the English line of kings.

[*THOMASINA rises and says her verse over in a whisper while TOM speaks.*

Tom (aside). Why, she has the same name as me, how extraordinary! It all feels like a dream. But she can't be me, because I'm here—and she's there—besides, we're not a bit alike. Oh dear! It makes my head ache, thinking so much.

Thomasina. There were seventeen Saxons, three Danes,
Not any had very long reigns.
Four Normans, oppressive and proud.

Then the fourteen Plantagenet crowd:

Of these, Harry the Second was first

And Richard the Third was the last.

The first of the five Tudor race
Was Henry the Seventh.

Six Stuarts of Scottish renown
Were the next that ascended the throne.

One Orange of Nassau, and he
Ascended the throne joyfully.

Five there have been of the Brunswick chain;

Queen Victoria's the sixth and long
may she reign!

Tom. Queen Victoria! Why, she's been dead for years. You mean King George, of course!

S. S. Chorus. She says Queen Victoria is dead!

Miss Prim. Miss Tomkins, I am sorry to find untruthfulness amongst your many sad faults. The last King Edward died on the 6th of July, 1553, in the sixteenth year of his age. The little prince Albert Edward——

Chorus. Bless his little heart!

Miss Prim. Who was born last year, may be king some day, but at present is more fit to wield the rattle than the sceptre. Miss Thomasina, if you cannot sit still I will tie you to the form.

Thomasina (to TOM in a loud

whisper). Stop pulling my hair, I beg of you. [*Shuffles.*]

Miss Prim. Miss Thomasina, you are sadly disobedient! Will some young lady kindly oblige me with a ribbon? (*Ties child to form.*) It is now the hour in which you study the globe with your revered preceptress Madame Fiddle - Faddle. Stand, young ladies, with the exception of Miss Thomasina. March into the Blue Room. Heads up! Shoulders straight! Toes turned out! Miss Thomasina, you remain.

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.—*Courtyard in front of school. Wall on right. Elder girls promenade with sunshades, small girls eat lunch and play. PEACOCK and SIMPER talk earnestly together.*

Peacock. I am sure my dear mamma, if she knew the descent of some of the scholars, would never permit me to mix with them.

Simper. Neither would mine, I vow. There was Sally Snippet telling me the other day that her papa was Sir Soulsby Snippet and that her aunt, Lady Seraphina Snippet, knew one of the Maids of Honour. But I *know* she is just a dressmaker's daughter. By the way she holds her fork you can see there is not a drop of blood in her veins——

Peacock. Yes, and I shouldn't wonder if her parents didn't live over a shop. Come, dear Susan,

let us look them up in the Peerage. [*Walk left and seat themselves.*]

Plume (to Tom). I sincerely pity you, poor child, when Madame Fiddle-Faddle sees your clothes. La! I shouldn't wonder but what you were turned out of the Academy.

Tom (biting a bun). Well, I don't care if I am. I'd rather be back in my own school any day. I'd jolly well like to take you, too—wouldn't the girls roar to see you wearing those things!

[*Pointing at pantelettes.*]

Plume (tossing her head). My dear, no one could be more fashionably attired than I am. It is not every young lady that is permitted to wear mousseline-de-laine robes to school—with lappels of taffeta and trimmed with Royal Mechlin lace, too! But my mamma moves in the highest circles—I dare say you have heard of the Ponsonby-Plumes?

Tom. No, I haven't.

Plume. A family of fashion, I assure you. But what, child, may I ask, is that curious-looking piece of stick you are hugging under your arm?

Tom. Why, haven't you seen a hockey-stick before? Come along—can you play?

Plume (scornfully). Play what, pray?

Tom. Hockey, to be sure. Look here, you have a ball—where's a ball? This'll do—(*takes bun*)—then you must have a stick—turn that umbrella-thing upside down.

Plume. My silk parasol?

Tom. Yes. Here, you have this—
(hands her hockey-stick)—and I'll have that. Now you hit—so——

Appleblossom. But what an unladylike game. You are a sad hoyden, I fear.

Thomasina. A good bun wasted!

Plod (looking up from book). It were better, Miss Tomkins, to be more diligent and attentive to your studies than to pursue your wild sports at this hour.

Plume. I do not think I should care to play, and you will ruin my parasol—my complexion has suffered already, standing with no protection in this hot sun. But come, Pamela Peacock and Susan Simper will be wishing to question you upon your antecedents. Miss Peacock and Miss Simper, I beg to present a humble candidate to your friendship and favour.

Simper. Dear me, what an extraordinarily dressed child! (Looking TOM up and down.) But perhaps her parents are foreigners, and that may account for it. Do you happen to be Dutch, or perhaps Australian? I've heard that Australians wear very little clothing and have a wild appearance.

Tom (offended). No, I happen to be English.

Peacock. Then tell me, my dear, who is your father, and in what profession?

Tom (stoops and picks up the dusty bun, and proceeds to eat). David Tomkins—a doctor.

Peacock. I presume he keeps a

carriage. Do you drive two horses or one?

Tom. Father drives a motor-car.

Simper (almost fainting). Motor-car! What on earth can the child mean? I suppose it is a kind of omnibus. (Aside.) I am sure my mamma will not wish me to know her.

Plume. And who, pray, was your grandfather?

Tom. Algernon Augustus Tomkins, of Tonic House—a doctor.

Peacock. And your great-grandfather? (Aside.) I know there is trade somewhere!

Tom. Thomas Henry Theophilus Tomkins, of Testube Manor—he was a doctor, too.

Thomasina. But I am sure you are quite mistaken, for he is my father, and if you doubt what I say, Miss, here is his portrait.

[Shows locket round her neck.

Tom (looking intently). That's great-grandfather right enough, I know by the scowl. Her father and my great-grandfather—then—then—she must be my Grandmother! Goodness, goodness me! I may as well go and vanish—or at least sit down. I shan't be born for years and years!

All. The child is mad!

[Whistle heard from wall—boy's head appears. Girls glance up and begin to arrange ringlets.

Thomasina (shyly—holding up her hands). My cousin Algernon!

Simper (to PEACOCK). Dear, I wonder if he has a valentine for me from you know whom!

Peacock. He is sure not to have forgotten me.

Plume. How my heart beats!

[ALGERNON descends looking very stout. Extracts with an air of mystery several valentines from his blouse.

Algernon. I am in mortal terror of being detected. Should my preceptor, Mr. Spankit, perceive me, I should barely escape with my life. Hasten, young ladies, to take your valentines. This is for Miss Peacock.

Peacock. I knew he was true.

Algernon. This for Miss Susan Simper.

Simper. Didn't I tell you, Pamela?

Algernon. Miss Plume—for you.

Plume. How my heart beats!

Algernon. Miss Appleblossom.

Appleblossom. For me!

Algernon. And you, fairest Thomasina, will you condescend to accept this from a humble and devoted admirer! [Bows.

Thomasina. Oh, sir!

Peacock (opens valentine, reads, and throws it down in disgust).

"See how the Peacock, puffed with pride,

Her humbler schoolmates doth deride.

Little guess they this female Fop
Doth own an Uncle in a shop.

But when he writes she calls—

'Come look,

'Tis from my kinsman, dears, the
Duke!'"

A vulgar, witless jest from some miserable schoolboy. Susan dear, pray show me yours.

Simper (reads).

"Sweet Simper, basking in thy smiles

Each task-master his time beguiles.

Smile on for ever, Miss, but pray
Don't think your flaunted charms
have sway;

Do not imagine that you rule
O'er any heart in Spankit's school."

Nothing but an insult, my dear. I shall inform Madame Fiddle-Faddle of young Algernon's coming over the wall.

Plume (looks at valentine). How beautiful! (Finds initials.) A. B. Oh! I believe it is from the pastry-cook's son. How dare he! I shall ask Mamma not to buy there in future. But what is Appleblossom so red about?

Appleblossom (reads).

"Art thou not dear unto my heart?

Oh! search that heart and see,
And from my bosom tear the part
That beats not true to thee.

But to that bosom thou art dear,
More dear than words can tell,
And if a fault be cherished there
'Tis loving thee too well."

It is signed W.V., but I don't know who that can be.

Simper (stamping her foot). False! False!

[Bursts into tears, and retires to seat with PEACOCK and PLUME, who try to comfort her.

Plod. I vow it is a stupid custom.

Tom. That's because you didn't have one. Read yours, grandmother.

Thomasina (reads).

"The Rose is red,
The Violet's blue,
Sugar is sweet,
And so are you."

[*Glances shyly at ALGERNON, who bows. Window opens and arm appears ringing bell. ALGERNON disappears.*

CURTAIN.

SCENE IV.—*Schoolroom, MISS PRIM seated alone on a kind of throne—a knock at the door.*

Miss Prim. Enter, young ladies! (*Girls file in, all but the two TOMKINS.*) Hold your heads up, young ladies, and walk with a more undulating movement. Miss Plod, that is a waddle, not a walk. You must swim into the room. - (*Does it herself.*) Miss Appleblossom, you will never get a husband if you stand with the sash so prominent. (*Girls walk up to her and curtsy in turn.*) Very good, Miss Peacock. Fair, Miss Simper. Rise carefully, Miss Plume. Miss Appleblossom, your ignorance is appalling. A lady in the high walks of society would curtsy so, my dear. (*Shows her.*) Ah, Miss Plod, shall I ever instil grace into your movements? Miss Locket, try to keep your tongue in. But where are the two Miss Tomkins?

[*Banging heard at door. TOM falls in dressed in frills, followed by THOMASINA in modern dress.*

Tom. Am I late? Sorry, Miss Prim—it took such an age getting into these things. I feel like a charade—what's this class?

Miss Prim. A lesson which you stand in dire need of, Miss Tomkins, that of *deportment*. Kindly retire and enter the room in a more ladylike manner. Walk once round and curtsy to me in passing.

[*TOM goes out and clumsily enters room—walks round awkwardly and kicks off her shoe.*

Peacock (aside to PLOD). Miss Tomkins is almost as clumsy as you, Maria.

Simper. More so, I vow.

Plume and Appleblossom. Much more.

Plod. I derive not the smallest gratification from the hollow ceremonies and etiquette of fashionable life, but prefer those pursuits to which utility and benefit are attached.

[*TOM falls before MISS PRIM—has to be helped up—retires.*

Miss Prim. Dis—graceful. In all the branches of useful learning which form part of the discipline of the school you are a confirmed dunce. No man of taste or pretensions would ever dream of uniting his destinies with one so shamefully uneducated in the first steps of high life!

Tom (grumbling aside). I don't see any steps—or any man, for that matter.

Enter THOMASINA, holding down brief skirts, red with shame. Starts to curtsy, hides her face, and runs off to form.

Thomasina (to the others). A precious plight I am in. She positively forced me to wear it!

Miss Prim (raising shocked hands). Thomasina, I am shocked to see you in that brief garment. Yes, you may well be ashamed of your length of—of—lower limb! (*THOMASINA tries to rush out again.*) No—it is too late to change. And now, young ladies, a little dance before you retire to don your trains and head-dresses for practice in Presentation at Court.

[*Girls dance—then retire into anteroom. MISS PRIM seats herself on kind of throne. Enter girls attired in lace curtain trains and feathers; all approach throne in turn and kiss MISS PRIM's hand.*]

Miss Prim. Charming, Miss Peacock! I predict for you marvellous success—you will some day move in the highest circles. Miss Simper, if you waggle your plumes thus when you appear at Court, you will be in danger of tickling her Majesty's face! Miss Plume—

Plume. Bother! That little cat, Maria Plod, has trod on my dress and spoilt the whole! [*Stamps.*]

Miss Prim. Miss Plume, you will pay five forfeits for using improper language. Miss Appleblossom, your mouth is sticky. Pray do not give a smacking kiss, Miss Thomasina—

the very slightest pressure of the lips. Miss Locket—

Tom (aside, falling over her train, with feather awry). I'm not going to kiss her hand. (*Aloud.*) Bother this old train; it's no use, Miss Prim, I shall never get there.

[*Falls prone at the foot of the throne.*]

Miss Prim. I vow this is preposterous! I wash my hands, young lady, of all responsibility for your future prospects. You will never, *never* get a husband!

CURTAIN.

SCENE V.—*Schoolroom. Girls discovered preparing lessons. PEACOCK and SIMPER walking up and down; books on their heads. PLUME at piano, book on head, pennies on hands. APPLEBLOSSOM and THOMASINA on backboards, the latter strapped, holding books. PLOD at desk. TOM, on edge of table, swinging her legs, in her modern dress.*

Tom. Well, of all the ridiculous sights! Do they think they are going to improve your appearance by strapping you to those backboards, or marching you about with books on your heads? What you want is to go to gym. twice a week and play tennis, and cricket and hockey—by the way, that old cat has taken away my hockey-stick—she says it's unladylike.

Peacock. You had better be careful—she might be listening at the door, and you've seen the new rule

about "Ladies' Profane Language"—*(takes down rule board)*—"Any young lady using improper adjectives, ejaculations, or vulgar expletives, to pay a fine of five forfeits for each such inelegant expression.

Appleblossom (reading from floor).

"But doubtless now you think the frame

Has to regard an equal claim.

The first that I shall mention here,
And make their uses to appear,

Are bones ; their number no less
great

Than two hundred and forty-
eight."

Thomasina. Two hundred and forty-eight bones ! Is *that* all ? I feel two thousand sticking into *me* !

Appleblossom (reads).

"And thus we move about with ease,
In whatsoever way we please——"

Thomasina. Oh, what bitter irony ! Pray do not read about moving about with ease, *Appleblossom*, until I am released from this odious board.

Simper. Speaking of forfeits, *Pamela*—I am bankrupt. Cannot you lend me a sufficiency to relieve me from my present embarrassment ? It is absolutely necessary that I should have some new bonnet-strings before next Sunday. I cried so over "Redmond the Rebel" that my tears positively ruined those pretty puce-coloured ribbons that *Monsieur de Prancy*, the dancing-master, so admired.

Peacock. Most willingly, dear, would I assist you, but it is really not in my power. I have not a farthing more than I shall require

for my own immediate purposes. I was fined for sneezing in class one halfpenny, and for leaving my miniature on the boudoir piano (I did it on purpose, *Susan*, for *Herr Strummer* to see during my music lesson) one halfpenny.

Simper. One halfpenny for reading the *Peerage* in Geography class.

Thomasina. One halfpenny for dirty hands, one halfpenny for having your sash untied.

Tom. Tuppence hae'penny for saying "Bother," and three ha'pence for yawning.

Appleblossom. One halfpenny for groaning when you're on the back-board.

Plod. One halfpenny for smearing ink over your face.

Plume (from piano). And fourpence for reading "The Ladies' Cabinet" while practising, and twopence more if they find you have hidden it inside the piano.

[*Begins to strum. Clock strikes four.* PEACOCK and SIMPER glance at time.]

Simper. Dear, the time is up. Shall we put on our bonnets and stroll on the terrace. I have quantities of *important* things to say to you. (*Whispering and giggling, puts on bonnet.*) Is that straight ? Do you not think this bonnet vastly becomes me ?

Tom (aside). Conceited things. They wear so much clothing they can think of nothing else. I'm glad I'm out of those frilly things ; I should never learn to walk in 'em.

Peacock (ties SIMPER'S strings).

You look sweet, dear. We will walk up and down where they can see us from the road——

Simper. To admire the fashion and elegance of our attire. Shall we take the Peerage?

Peacock. Of course. What do you think, Susan dear, of this sweet locket? There is a lock of *his* hair in it—at least my brother swears it is——

Simper. It looks uncommonly like your red hearthrug at home. Are you sure——

[SIMPER and PEACOCK go out together, whispering, with arms entwined.]

Plum (gets up and bangs piano. Picks up book. Reads, while TOM stands behind her mimicking her gestures). “A charming morning and walking costume which combines the great essentials of simplicity and elegance. A graceful aplomb is given to the figure by the fine tucks——” How perfectly elegant! I shall ask mamma to copy it—I shall be an object of flattery and admiration.

[Walks out with book, followed to door by TOM, who imitates her swaggering gait.]

Appleblossom (yawns and rises from backboard). The hour for departure at last! I thought preparation would never be over. Oh, how I ache!—two hundred and forty-eight bones! Come, Maria, leave your books.

Plod (rises reading).

“I think the next material part

We have to mention is the heart;

This holds the blood, or vital store,

For which it cavities has four——”

Oh dear, oh dear, I shall *never* know it—is there any ink on my nose, Appleblossom?

Appleblossom. Not *nearly* so much as usual, dear.

[APPLEBLOSSOM and PLOD walk off together.]

Tom. And I am left alone with grandmother. Grandmother, will you come home with me?

Thomasina. If you will first release me from this intolerable board.

Tom (unstrapping her with difficulty). Why did they strap you in, grandmother?

Thomasina. For kicking, I fear.

Tom. Oh, naughty! but you're not such a bad little thing—not like the others, always talking of your clothes or your admirers, or your high birth or my bad manners.

Thomasina (primly). But you *have* very bad manners.

Tom. Now, don't begin to preach. You're getting just like you are at home. *You* never broke the rules in *your* day, you tell me. Oh, grandmother, grandmother, and I saw you break five to-day. *You* never had a smutty face—why, it's smutty now!

Thomasina (peering at her reflection in a picture). No, indeed, it is only chocolate-cream!

Tom. *You* never stuck pins into the dancing-master's calves to see if they were real—oh no! *You*

will be telling me that you never had a valentine next.

"The Rose is red,
The Violet's blue——"

Oh, *now* I can tease you! I s'pose your memory goes when you are old, and you forget that you were ever a little girl. But how dark it is getting—aren't you coming home with me, grandmother? Where are you? — grandmother — grandmother—(*curtain*)—grandmother!

[*Curtain rises after a short drop. Old grandmother in cap and Paisley shawl is discovered seated by the fire in an arm-chair, knitting. TOM lies on a rug at her feet.*

Grandmother (*in shaky voice*). Yes, my dear.

Tom. Why, why—(*rubbing her eyes*) —I must go and see an oculist. No, she's still there. I must have been

dreaming, and it's after nine—bed-time, I suppose, and I haven't done half my lessons. Oh dear! oh dear!

[*Yawns and rises.*

Grandmother. Yes, hasten, my dear, you should have gone half-an-hour ago. Pick up your books—all strewn about the floor, and don't forget to wash that smutty face. Such unpunctuality, such carelessness—it never was so when I was young!

Tom (*in amazed amusement*). Well!

[*Gathers up books and walks off singing.*

"The Rose is red,
The Violet's blue,
Sugar is sweet,
And so are you!"

[*Exit, kissing her hand to her*
GRANDMOTHER.

CURTAIN.

THE SNOW QUEEN

(HANS ANDERSEN)

By BERTHA M. SKEAT, Ph.D.

(*Principal of Balfour School, Sedburgh*)

As the name suggests, the action of this play takes place for the most part amidst snow-covered landscape similar to that illustrated in Fig. 1. The wings, Fig. 2, should represent trees with branches weighed down under snow, and the general effect may be greatly heightened by the introduction of some real branches stuck

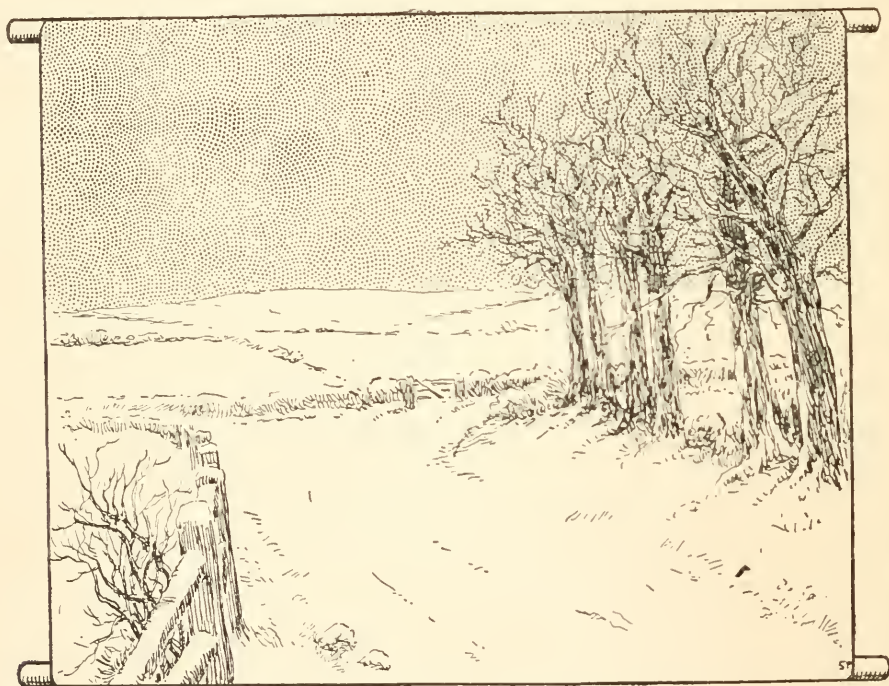


FIG. 1

into holes bored in blocks of wood and placed near the back-cloth. The leaves of these branches must be liberally covered with flour, upon which a little theatrical frost should be scattered. The floor may be covered with white drugget, sprinkled here and there with frost. The stage thus arranged will serve for the prologue.

For Scene I. the stage should be set as described above, the only difference

being the addition of a cottage wing similar to that described in "Thickhead," but whitened to give the appearance of being covered with snow.

For Scene II. the Witch's garden must be made with a back-cloth similar to that described for the sandy lane in "Milkmaids," special wings, however, Figs. 3 and 4, being made for the occasion. The side of the cottage, shown in Fig. 3, should consist of a flat with a practicable door, the portion indicated by dotted lines being fastened to the flat and painted as in the illustration. From the lower portion of this a wooden fence, the beginning of which is shown in the diagram, should stretch right across the stage, and can be made of a flat laid on its side and painted to represent boards with an irregular outline. The other wing, Fig. 4, represents a tree, at the bottom of which is a beehive. The whole stage may be hung with garlands of roses, and can be ornamented with plants in pots and boxes of earth filled with paper flowers.



FIG. 2

The stage arrangement of the prologue will serve for the remaining three scenes. In Scene IV., however, the Lapp woman's hovel will have to be constructed of a flat containing a practicable door and painted to represent logs of wood buried under snow. In Scene V. a throne should be arranged for the Snow Queen—

an ordinary wooden arm-chair painted white and placed upon a small white dais will serve admirably for the purpose. In Scene VI. the Grandmother and two children may appear before the audience in front of the curtain, so that when this rises a tableau may be arranged in the manner described at the end of the play.

The Snow Queen.—This character may be dressed in a long white frock bound round the waist with a silver girdle. Beneath the gold crown on her head should be a long white gauze veil. A long Egyptian scarf—silver foil worked into the material—will prove a very attractive addition to this costume.

Kay and Gerda.—The little boy and girl can be dressed in simple costumes of blue—he being in a dark shade, and she in pale blue, with white shoes.

The Robber Maid.—A characteristic dress for this young lady can be made with a scarlet zouave and skirt with a white bodice, whilst a small cap adorned with a feather may be perched jauntily upon her head.

The Witch.—A typical witch's costume, consisting of a long black cloak hiding the body, with the exception of her feet, will suffice for this character. On her

head should be a witch's steeple hat, and in her hand she should have a walking-stick to support her tottering form.

The Lapp Woman.—A suitable costume for a Lapp woman is shown in Fig. 5 ; but if any difficulty be experienced in making it correctly, a dress of furs, roughly shaped into garments, may be substituted.

Grandmother.—A plain dark grey dress with a white shawl and white cap will suffice for the old Grandmother's costume. The old lady's face should be lined, and her hair powdered to a silvery white.

The Snow Maidens.—The Snow Queen's dress may be taken as the pattern

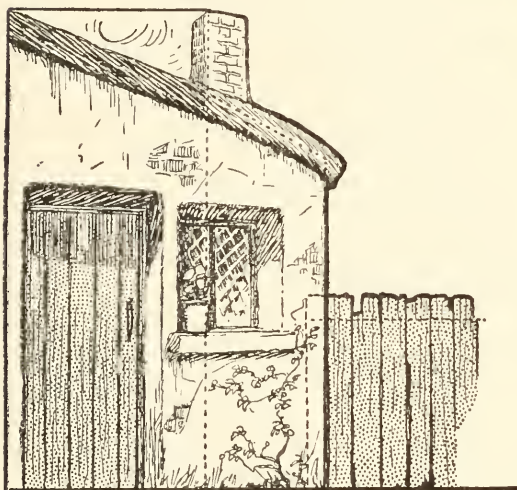


FIG. 3



FIG. 4

upon which all the costumes for her maidens can be based. They need not have veils, however, and may be more simply dressed in every way.

The King and his Elves.—The costumes for the Elves should be similar to those described for the Seven Dwarfs in "Snowdrop"; the tunic should, however, be scarlet, and the caps and hose may be of the same colour. The King can wear a gold crown in place of a cap, and may be further adorned with a gold chain around his neck.

Rose, Lily, and Marguerite.—The three flower fairies should be dressed to resemble their prototypes. *Rose* may be dressed in a pink frock trimmed with roses, and white stockings and shoes. A garland of wild roses around her head will complete her costume. The costume for *Lily* should be white and green, the skirt, reaching to just below the knee, being cut in deep scallops—this skirt being over a yellow petticoat. The legs can be encased in yellow stockings, with shoes of the same colour. Whilst the skirt is white the bodice can be green, and tight

fitting; and long ribbons of the same colour should hang from the shoulders, Fig. 6. Above her head a piece of cardboard cut in the shape of a lily leaf and painted green should be supported by an imitation stalk made of wire covered with wadding and wrapped round with green paper. This wire can be attached securely inside the bodice at the neck.

Marguerite's costume should be founded upon that of Lily, the colours of



FIG. 5



FIG. 6

the bodice and skirt being reversed, and the latter having a border of marguerites. In place of the long trailing ribbons from the shoulders, Marguerite may have short white strings, whilst a large daisy, supported above the head in the same fashion as the lily leaf, can be made of cardboard and fringed with petals.

It may be as well to note that the snowballs used in the prologue can be made of white woollen balls, or even tennis-balls covered with wadding.

THE SNOW QUEEN

CHARACTERS.

SNOW QUEEN.

KAY.

GERDA.

ROBBER MAID.

WITCH.

LAPP WOMAN.

GRANDMOTHER.

SNOW MAIDENS.

SIX ELVES AND KING.

1 { ROSE.

{ LILY.

{ MARGUERITE.

PROLOGUE.—*The Magic Mirror.*SCENE I.—*Kay's Disappearance.*SCENE II.—*Gerda in the Witch's Garden.*SCENE III.—*Gerda and the Robber Maiden.*SCENE IV.—*Gerda and the Lapp Woman.*SCENE V.—*The Snow Queen's Palace.*EPILOGUE.—*Kay's Return, Christmas-tree Tableau.*

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

PROLOGUE.—*A Snow-covered Landscape.**Snowball drill by GNOMES, with KING directing them.*

King. Now rest awhile, my faithful Gnomes, and I will show you my latest invention for plaguing these wretched mortals.

[Unveils the magic mirror.]

1st Gnome (looking in). Oh, how handsome I am!

2nd Gnome (looking in). What sparkling eyes, what beautiful golden hair I have!

3rd Gnome. What a gentle, sweet expression is mine!

4th Gnome. How pensive and interesting I look!

King (impressively). Now you must know that the property of this magic mirror is to make everything look just the opposite of what it really is.

Gnomes (groaning). Oh! Ugh! Ah! Eh?

King. Oh, don't afflict yourselves! It does not matter to you, but we shall see how it will torment those foolish humans, who are so fond of looking at themselves in the glass on every opportunity.

Gnomes (joyously). Yes, yes, we shall see! Here are two of them coming!

KAY and GERDA enter with their arms round each other, and pass across the stage. KAY glances into the mirror.

Kay. O Gerda, what a fright!

Gerda. What is the matter, dear Kay—have you hurt yourself?

Kay. Oh no, I only fancied for a moment that you were—it is nothing, nothing at all. *[Exeunt.]*

King. There, you see what fun it will be! But I will tell you a better joke than that. Carry it up to the sky and make the sun look

¹ If more characters were needed these flowers could each be represented by bands of girls.

black and ugly, and it will be so frightened at itself that it will stop shining.

Gnomes. Yes, yes, that will be the best joke of all. Hurry up and look sharp! [*Exeunt, dragging the mirror.*]

King. Now the mischief is beginning to work!

[*A loud crash is heard.*]

GNOMES rush in with their hands full of pieces.

1st Gnome. Please, your Majesty, it wasn't I. *He* did it.

2nd Gnome. No, *he* did it; I saw him!

3rd Gnome. No, no, it was *his* fault, all of it.

All together. It wasn't I! It was he—it was he! It wasn't I!

King. Be silent! What have you done with the glass?

Gnomes. Please, your Majesty, it slipped out of our hands. Here are the pieces.

King. Well, no matter, we can go from bad to worse. Scatter the pieces over the whole world.

Gnomes (scatter pieces, singing). In his eye, let it fly,
He shall spy all awry.
Cold, cold, icy cold
Be the heart this glass shall hold!

Enter KAY and GERDA, hand in hand.

Gerda. Oh, how it is snowing, Kay! We must haste home to Grandmother.

Kay. Ah, something hit me in the eye! I'll pay you out for this!

[*Pushes her away.*]

Gerda. Kay, what is the matter? You know I would not hurt you for the world!

Kay. That's a likely story, indeed. You can just go home by yourself now, and I shall not come till I choose.

[*He runs off, and GERDA after him, crying.*]

King. Now we'll see some sport!

Gnomes. Hip, hip, hurrah!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE I. — *The Cottage.* GRANDMOTHER standing at door. KAY and GERDA with skates in hand. KAY with sledge.

Grandmother. Now run away and play like good children, and mind you come home in good time, or else the Snow Queen will get you.

Kay. Who is the Snow Queen? She won't get *me*, anyhow.

Grandmother. Little boys should not contradict.

[*KAY stamps his foot.*]

Gerda. But what is the Snow Queen like, Grannie dear?

Grandmother. A tall white lady, with cold blue eyes and glittering hair, who catches hold of disobedient children and carries them off to her great ice-palace at the North Pole.

Gerda. And do they ever come back again?

Grandmother. Not that *I* ever heard of. But run away now, and give me a kiss before you go.

[*GERDA kisses her.*]

Kay. I'm getting too old for that sort of thing.

[*Turns away sulkily.* GRAND-MOTHER goes in, shaking her head. GNOMES run in. They dance with delight at back of stage.

Gerda (*runs up to KAY*). Kay dear, won't you show me how you skate now?

Kay. Yes, I can do it much better than the other boys. You will see now!

[*Skating song, joined in by GNOMES, who enter with skates in hand.*—"Over the ice in moonlit sheen" (Novello).

Gerda. Kay, don't you think it's time to go home now? It is beginning to get dark already.

Kay. You can go if you like, and take my skates back with you. I'm going sledging.

Gerda. But Kay, Grandmother said—

Kay. What do I care! You go off home—I shall stop and play with the other boys as long as I like.

[*Exit GERDA, sorrowfully.*

GNOMES and KAY play with sledge. *Slow music.*

Enter SNOW QUEEN and MAIDENS.

GNOMES *slink out.* SNOW

QUEEN *sings, waving her hands.*

KAY *stares at her as if fascinated.*

SONG.—"The Spell"

From the realm of the frozen North,

From the untrod icy plains,

That Frost King passing forth

Hath bound with his iron chains:

From my palace of ice I come,

Where the pillars of crystal rise:

The lonely echoing dome

Gleams white 'neath the frozen skies.

Where the magic of climes unknown

Draws heroes to dare and die,

In lands of mystery lone

Their skeletons bleaching lie.

Hence do I come—

Hence do I come

To charm thee, to draw thee

On to thy doom—

To thy doom—

Come—come—come.

[*She glides slowly backward, beckoning him. KAY follows her in silence. Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Witch's Garden.*

Three FLOWER FAIRIES standing at back of garden.

Enter GERDA.

Gerda. Kay, Kay, where are you?

—I have come such a long way to find you and I'm so tired. I'll sit down and rest a few minutes. . . .

Oh, how sore my feet are! I gave my new scarlet shoes to the river to take me to Kay, and it brought the boat down as far as this lovely garden, so I thought I might find him here. I'll wait a little to see if he comes.

[*Sits down, gradually falls asleep.*

SONG: *The Fairies.*

(Words from "*Blossoms and Berries*," by F. Westwood. Music by Dolores.)

Flower Fairies. Gerda ! Gerda !
Gerda !

Gerda (jumps up). Who called me ?
Oh, you beautiful fairies ! Please,
what are your names ? And is this
your garden ? And may I stay here
a little while ?

Fairies (song and dance)—"C'est
moi qui suis la rose," &c.

Fairies. Gerda, Gerda, Gerda,
venez, &c.

[GERDA joins in the dance.

*Just as it ends, the old WITCH
enters ; she shakes her hand
threateningly at the FAIRIES.*

Witch. Mironton, Mironton, Mir-
ontaine. Allez-vous-en, vous m'en-
nuyez, tout de suite !

[FAIRIES vanish. GERDA falls
on her knees.

Witch. Qu'allez-vous faire dans
cette Galère ? What are you doing
here, child, I should like to know ?

Gerda. Please, ma'am, I came to
look for Kay.

Witch (waving her wand). And
pray, who is Kay ?

Gerda (drowsily). Who is Kay ?
Who—is—what—is—who ?—

Witch (severely). Rel. pro. sing.
number, 3rd person, nom. case !
Go down four places !

[GERDA rises, and obeys her
mechanically.

Witch. Please to remember you
are only a common noun, and of no
importance whatever. And don't
bother me about any other part of
speech in future. Can you make
beds, and wash dishes, and do plain
cooking ? Very plain, of course ?

Gerda (meekly). Yes, ma'am.

[Curtsies.

Witch. Then I shall take you into
my service immediately, and you
will do exactly as you are told from
morning to night, without shirking.

Gerda. Yes, indeed, ma'am.

[Curtsies in a dazed manner.

Witch. Now I am going indoors
to take my afternoon nap, and as
soon as I wake I shall expect to find
the tea quite ready—no sugar—and
a saucer of cream for the cat, do
you hear ?

Gerda (dreamily). Yes, ma'am.

[Exit WITCH, re-enter FAIRIES.

Gerda (rubbing her eyes). Oh, where
am I—is it all a dream ? Dear, kind
Fairies, do help me to remember !

Rose. Gerda, have you forgotten
the little flower-garden that you and
your playmate Kay used to water
together, and the flowers climbing
up by the cottage window, where
you and Kay were sitting in the
sun ?

Gerda. Oh yes, the flowers. . . .
Kay was so fond of them, till the
Snow Queen took him away—and I
was trying to find him ! Oh, can you
tell me where he is gone ? I am so
afraid—do you think he could be—
dead ?

Lily. No, dear Gerda. I have
been down in the earth quite lately,
and I heard the voices of all the
flowers that hid there while the
Snow Queen was passing. And Kay
was not under the earth, so we
know he is not dead. But you have
a long, long way to go before you
find him.

Gerda. Oh, then I must make haste and go as quickly as I can! Please tell me, which is the best way to look for him?

Marguerite. I can tell you that, Gerda, for he passed me when he was going to the North. You must go straight on from here, till you come to the Golden Palace, on the edge of a dark pine forest. Go in, and ask to see the Princess, and she will tell you how to go further.

Gerda. Thank you so much, dear Fairies! I must go now, but perhaps I shall see you all again some day.

All Flowers. Oh yes, and we will go with you a little way, but we cannot bear the cold winds of the North. Come quickly, dear child.

[*Exeunt to waltz music—"The Garden of Sleep."*]

SCENE III.—*Snowy Landscape, with a pine forest in background.*

Enter GERDA, wearing a warm muff, a glittering necklace, and neat shoes.

Gerda (looking anxiously about her). Oh, how dark it is getting in this great wood! I am so afraid of losing the way! The Princess told me to keep straight on. But what shall I do when the night comes?—Perhaps there are *wolves* in this forest! Hark—*(with a little scream)*—what's that?

[*Listens, while a voice is heard singing and coming nearer.*]

Robber Maid (jumping out suddenly, with a drawn dagger in her hand). Stand and deliver!

Gerda. Oh, please don't prosecute me, I'm not a trespasser!

Robber Maid. You may not be anything at all, but I'm a highway-woman! *(In an awful tone.)* Take—off—those—shoes!

[*GERDA obeys, beginning to sob.*]

Robber Maid. Now that necklace—and that pussicat-thing that you've got for keeping your hands inside!

Gerda. But — but — the Princess gave them me for my very own . . .

Robber Maid. Well, *that's* no reason. You've had them quite long enough, and it's *my* turn now. There, take those! *(Flings her gloves at GERDA, and kicks off her boots towards her.)* Now go and sit down, with your back to me, mind, and put those things on; and don't you look round till I give the word, or you'll be a ghost in two minutes. *(GERDA obeys, while the ROBBER-MAID puts on the necklace, muff, and shoes.)* Attention! Right-about-face! *(GERDA springs up and turns round.)* Just look how well these shoes fit me! Why, they're real dancing-shoes! I'll show you what I can do in them!

[*Dances the sword dance.*]

Gerda (claps her hands). Splendid! Splendid! I am so glad you have got the shoes; they do much better for you than for me. And these nice warm boots will be much more useful to me on the journey.

Robber Maid. Schnip, schnap, schnurre.

Purre, basilurre!

Who talks of journeys? I am going

to keep you here to play with, as long as I choose!

[*Seizes her roughly.*]

Gerda. Oh no, *please* do let me go; I *must* go on trying to find Kay.

Robber Maid. Kay! what's that?—It sounds like chocolates. You'll give me half, won't you, and I'll do all the killing for you.

Gerda. No, indeed! Kay is a boy, and the Snow Queen has taken him away to the North Pole, and I'm going to fetch him home again.

Robber Maid. So that's it, is it? Well, my dear, have you got Nansen to lend you his only suit of clothes for fifteen months, or are you going by aeroplane, the very latest?

Gerda. Why do you laugh at me so? I shall get there *some* day, if I go on walking long enough. And they told me I had to go to Lapland first, and they would tell me the rest of the way from there.

Robber Maid. Yes, that is easy enough. You have only to take a berth in the new Arctic liner, the *Pole Star*, and it takes you there in nineteen hours. Now I come to think of it, I know the very man for you!

Gerda (*breathlessly*). Who is it? Do take me to him!

Robber Maid. That I will. He's a very dear friend of mine; in fact, he is my own particular reindeer—born in Lapland when he was young, and knows every inch of the country down to the ground. Come

along with me, we'll go and see him about it at once.

[*Exit, dragging GERDA. Russian dance—Pas des Patineurs* (Fred Godfrey).]

SCENE IV.—*The LAPP WOMAN'S Hovel* (snow-hut).

Enter GERDA, wearily.

Gerda. So this is Lapland at last! I seem to have been trudging for miles over the snow, and I don't know whether I am on the road or off it, but at least this looks like a human hut at last. But how shall I make them hear, I wonder? You can't knock at the door of a snow-hut, and they would think me *too* rude if I went in without knocking.

[*Calls faintly, "Cooee—cooee!"*]

Enter LAPP WOMAN, muttering furiously.

Lapp Woman. A, ab, absque, coram, de, palam clam, cum, ex!

Gerda. What *shall* I do? I don't know the language! How *shall* I make her understand? (*Makes a deep curtsey.*) Good morning. Have you used—oh no, what *am* I saying? *That* won't do either. (*Points to her feet wistfully.*) I'm so tired! Will you let me rest here a little? I'll give you this ribbon.

[*Holds out a coloured ribbon.*]

Lapp Woman (*somewhat mollified*). Ante, apud, ad, adversus, circum, circa, citra, cis!

Gerda (*aside*). She *sounds* a little kinder; I must try to show her how hungry and thirsty I am.

[*Makes gestures of eating and drinking.*]

Lapp Woman (nodding her head).
Penes, pone, post et præter, prope,
propter, per, secundum, supra,
versus, ultra, trans!

[Retires to hut, brings out a bowl of milk for GERDA and bit of dried fish (loofah). Watches her eat, touches her face and dress curiously; finally rubs noses.]

Gerda (rising embarrassed). Thank you very much indeed for your kindness. I must be going now.

Lapp Woman (making signs for her to enter hut). Bene, male, satis, re; ad, ante, con, in, inter, de.

Gerda. Oh no, thank you. I must really make haste and be going. Can you tell me the way, please, to the Snow Queen's Palace—*(with frantic gestures)*—the Sn-ow Queen's Pal-ace? *(Louder.)* Snow Queen's Palace?

Lapp Woman (pulling out a candle and anxiously making signs to GERDA to eat it). Aa—eh—ee—oh—oo!

Gerda (returning it politely). Thank you so much, but I really should be sorry to deprive you of it. Good-bye—good-bye.

[Exit, waving her hand.]

"Tarantelle" (Raff).

SCENE V.—SNOW QUEEN'S Palace.

QUEEN on throne. MAIDENS standing round. KAY sitting at her feet.

Queen. Many nights hast thou been with us, Kay, and many marvellous things hast thou seen and heard. But not yet have we shown

thee all the wonders of our Palace. And now, before we journey to the South, would'st thou behold once more the magic and the beauty of the North?

Kay. O Queen, I remember nought of the past, save as a painful dream, from which I am now awakened. And it is good that I dream no longer. For having beheld the secrets of this Palace, shall I not come to be accounted among the wisest of the children of men?

Queen. True, O Kay, and now behold and ponder in silence on the things that are yet to be revealed. Maidens, come forth, and tell us somewhat of the sufferings of those foolish mortals who have remained upon the earth.

[Recitation by SNOW MAIDENS—"The death of Minnehaha" *(Longfellow).]*

Queen. Even on earth are we supreme! But give us now a song of the joys of our Northern clime.

SONG.—"Snowflakes," by Arthur Cottam (Novello, No. 278); or "Winter," by W. Macfarren (Novello, No. 159).

Queen. Come, tell me now some legend of that mystic land where our great rival the Sphinx is, Queen.

[SNOW MAIDEN recites "The Victim" (Tennyson).]

Queen. Yet another tale of the folly of these weak mortals, who love and suffer as we never can. Sing, maidens, once more, to restore us to the clear cold regions

above the stormy passions of mankind.

[SNOW MAIDENS (song and dance)—“*Merrily, Merrily over the Snow*” (Novello).

Queen. Enough, we must now depart on our progress to the sultry South. And if, by the time we return, thou, O Kay, hast found the magic word that is hidden within these eight letters of frozen ice, thou shalt be no more my slave, but lord of thy self and master of the world.

[Gives KAY the letters ETERNITY.

Kay. Now this will I certainly do; for surely there is nothing better in the whole earth than the power to rule and be king over men.

[Puzzles over the letters.

Enter GERDA silently, looking around her. She sees KAY and runs up to him.

Gerda. Kay! O Kay, I have found you at last!

Kay. Who is that? It is most important that I should not be disturbed just now, as I am engaged in an exceedingly abstruse mathematical calculation.

Gerda. O Kay, don't you know me? Have you forgotten Gerda, your little playfellow?

[Bursts into tears and flings her arms around his neck. The warm tears melt the ice at his heart, and he awakes gradually, as from a dream.

Kay. What is this? Am I dreaming, or is the ice at my heart melting

away? Where am I? Gerda, is this really you? What are we doing out here in this cold dismal place?

Gerda. Dear Kay, how glad I am to have found you at last! Let us come away quickly from this dreadful country. Come home with me. Grannie is waiting for us all this long while. Come, come!

[Exeunt.¹

“*Gloria in Excelsis*” (Mozart). Afterwards, “*Adeste Fideles*” is played softly, as at a distance, getting louder till just before the next scene opens.

EPILOGUE.—*Snowy Foreground.*

Enter GRANDMOTHER with knitting in hand, shading her eyes expectantly. From opposite side enter KAY and GERDA hand in hand, who run to her.

Gerda. Here he is, Grannie! I have brought him back to you at last!

[Embraces her.

Kay. You dear old Gran, you are just as young and lovely as ever! (Kisses her hand.) And how bright and home-like the cottage looks!

Grandmother. Don't you know, dear children, that this is Christmas Eve? And there is a great surprise ready for you in the corner there. I felt sure you would both be coming home to-night.

Gerda. O Grannie, may I peep?

Grandmother. Yes, both of you

¹ If this scene is too long, the recitations can be omitted.

now pull away the curtain, and you shall see what you shall see.

[*Curtain lifted. Christmas-tree and general tableau, with all characters.*]

CHRISTMAS CAROL—"From Far Away we come to You."

TABLEAU

ELF KING.	SNOW QUEEN.	ROBBER GIRL.	<i>Christmas-tree.</i>
ELVES.	SNOW MAIDENS.	LAPP WOMAN.	ROSE. LILY. DAISY.
ELVES.	SNOW MAIDENS.		WITCH.

(*Curtain.*)

KAY.

GRANDMOTHER.

GERDA.

Motif of the Tableau.—The Elf King and the Snow Queen regard the Christmas-tree with disdain, this feeling being shared by their attendants, who should be intermingled to give a good colour contrast. The three Flower Fairies, standing with arms interlaced, admire the Tree, whilst the old Witch shakes her fist at it. The Lapp woman is perfectly indifferent, but the Robber Maid stands or kneels with her arms outstretched towards it.

PETER GRIEF

A MORAL PLAY

By OLIVE ALLEN

A VERY simple interior for this play can be arranged with flats covered with wall-paper ornamented with sprigs of roses, or any other similarly dainty pattern. Pictures and furniture of the Regency period should adorn this room, a portrait of the late Mr. Pluperfect in silhouette between those of two ancient maiden aunts being very prominent. The arrangement of doors and windows can be made as desired.

COSTUMES

Peter Grief.—This lachrymose character should be acted by a tall, thin boy, who must make up his face to appear perpetually on the verge of tears. He should wear a black jersey, tights, and trunks, Fig. 1, the latter being ornamented with large spangles; the tights having long-pointed toes sewn to them. From his belt hangs a leather bag bearing his initials, and containing the supply of pocket-handkerchiefs which he uses when condoling with the victims of his melancholy sympathy. The long-pointed sleeves should be sewn to the large collar or cape, the whole garment being of green sateen lined with bright red. Upon his head Peter Grief must wear a lank-haired black wig. The handkerchief with which he mops up his ever-flowing tears may be of an eccentric pattern and of large size.

Mrs. Pluperfect.—The simple costume shown in Fig. 2 will suit the character of this lady admirably. The low-necked dress should be high-waisted and fall simply to the feet—unadorned with any frills. Plain sleeves reach to her mittened hands, and the fichu round her neck is fastened with a large brooch. So far as the head-dress is concerned a study should be made of contemporary portraits, the principal feature being the long curls.

The three daughters can have costumes founded upon those already described in "The Little Female Academy," or more simple dresses can be made of long frocks tied round the waist with a broad sash. In this case the sleeves should only reach half-way down to the elbow.

Master Henry Pluperfect.—The long trousers worn by Master Tomkins in the above-mentioned play should come outside the blouse in the present instance, their tops being ornamented with large buttons, and reaching almost to the armpits. The blouse, with frilled collar and large bow, is adorned with a double row of large buttons. Master Henry may wear white stockings and buckled shoes, and should in every respect look a neat, prim young gentleman.

Lady Fitzherbert.—This lady and her daughter will appear in walking costumes similar to that shown in Fig. 3. The plain cloak has fur wrist-bands and a fur-

edged collar above a somewhat similar cape. A poke-bonnet edged with fur will complete the dress.

Susan.—A plain print dress with an overlapping collar tied with a large bow in front, and ample apron and big mob-cap, will suit Susan admirably.



FIG. 1



FIG. 2



FIG. 3

An enormous cake can be manufactured out of cardboard, and covered with cotton-wool to represent icing and sprinkled with bright-coloured sweets. The jam-pot with which Miss Louisa amuses herself should be of a large pattern, and have a big label with "Damson Jam" inscribed thereon in large characters.

PETER GRIEF

CHARACTERS.

PETER GRIEF, *a Supernatural Being.*

MRS. PLUPERFECT.

MISS JANE PLUPERFECT.

MISS HARRIET PLUPERFECT.

MISS LOUISA PLUPERFECT.

MASTER HENRY PLUPERFECT.

LADY FITZHERBERT.

THE HONOURABLE AUGUSTA FITZHERBERT.

SUSAN, *a Servant.*

ACT I.

SCENE.—MRS. PLUPERFECT'S *Front Parlour.*

MRS. PLUPERFECT *discovered in parlour crocheting. Loud ring at door bell. SUSAN opens door and announces* LADY FITZHERBERT.

Mrs. Pluperfect (rising, rather flushed—aside). Lady Fitzherbert! This is indeed an honour. How unfortunate that the dear children should not yet have returned from the Seminary. This would have been such an excellent opportunity—*(Aloud.)* Ah, Lady Fitzherbert! *(Curtseys.)* I am *charmed* to see you. Will you do me the honour to be seated? Susan, bring some refreshment. And how is the Honourable Augusta?

[*SUSAN arrives with cakes and wine, which she sets on table between them. MRS. PLUPERFECT fills two glasses.*

Lady Fitzherbert (sipping wine elegantly). Augusta is well. I may say her bodily health is excellent. But I fear that my poor child, with all the attention she receives at routs and assemblies, is becoming somewhat addicted to taking delight in dress and such vanities.

Mrs. Pluperfect. So unlike my darling Jane! Modesty and retirement are writ upon her features. She prefers the plainest of gowns. "Mamma," she will say, "the usages of the fashionable world would be exceedingly distasteful to me. Rather would I store my mind with every branch of female knowledge, and perfect myself in those useful arts, in the exercise of which the character of a notable woman should consist."

Lady Fitzherbert. What a sweet child! Augusta must meet her. I fear my daughter is not always as decorous in her conduct or lady-like in speech as is compatible with the behaviour of a young lady of quality.

Mrs. Pluperfect. Indeed, your Ladyship! I am all astonishment! Could you but see my Harriet. What elegance of manner! What refinement of speech! Harriet would grace the drawing-room of any lady in the fashionable world.

Lady Fitzherbert. Augusta must watch her, and profit by your Harriet's example. I have some-

times noticed in my poor child something of a fondness for good things, though her governess and I strive to curb her youthful appetite.

Mrs. Pluperfect. I have often thought how many mothers would be proud of a child such as my little Louisa. Greed is not known to her. Every good thing that is brought to her she saves for her brothers and sisters. Invariably she extracts the currants from her cake lest they should disagree with her, and I have heard her remark she'd a deal rather have plain and wholesome food than any dainty.

Lady Fitzherbert. Mrs. Pluperfect, you are singularly blessed in your children. It would afford me the utmost felicity could I meet these sweet young ladies. You have also a dear little boy—have you not?

Mrs. Pluperfect. Henry, my youngest. Although only eight years of age, he is proficient in orthography, caligraphy, natural philosophy, and all branches of science. He is never to be seen without a book in his hand. But I think I hear the darlings. They have but now come from the Seminary.

Door opens, and CHILDREN enter with schoolbags, &c.

Mrs. Pluperfect. My dears, I hope you remembered to rub your boots?

Children. Yes, mamma.

Mrs. Pluperfect. And now come and speak to Lady Fitzherbert. This, ma'am, is Jane, my eldest.

Jane (curtseys). How do you do, ma'am?

Mrs. Pluperfect. And this my sweet Harriet.

Harriet (curtseys). I hope you are well, ma'am.

Mrs. Pluperfect. Louisa, make your bow. (*LOUISA curtseys.*) And last, my little Henry—as your Ladyship sees, never without his book.

Henry (bows). I am pleased to make your acquaintance, ma'am.

Lady Fitzherbert. The pleasure, my dear, is mutual. And I hope you have profited by your scholastic studies to-day?

Children (curtseying and bowing). We have, ma'am.

[*JANE seats herself with some plain needlework, HARRIET with crochet, LOUISA with her doll, and HENRY with a book.*]

Lady Fitzherbert. I shall be very happy to bring my little Augusta to see you all one day this week. You and she, Jane, must be about of an age, and perhaps would enjoy dressing your dolls together—

Jane. I am exceedingly obliged, ma'am, but probably our dispositions and pursuits may be uncongenial, as I deem it a waste of time to amuse myself with playthings when I might be doing a little plain sewing to help my good mamma.

Mrs. Pluperfect (triumphantly). Is it not as I told you, ma'am?

Lady Fitzherbert. It is very creditable, in so young a miss, that she should delight in useful accomplishments. In fact, I have such excellent accounts of you all that I wish, Mrs. Pluperfect, with your permission,

to send a large cake as a treat for these three little Misses and Master Henry. I shall myself bring my daughter Augusta to see you in a few days, that she may benefit by your example.

[ALL rise, bow, and curtsy.

Harriet. Dear Lady Fitzherbert, how can we express our gratitude! We shall be overjoyed to meet the Hon. Augusta, and bid her welcome to our poor abode. And we all anticipate with pleasure—not unseemly, I hope—the treat you have so kindly promised us.

Lady Fitzherbert (aside). What perfection!

Louisa (to HENRY). I intend to save half my share of the cake to take to the poor little girl for whom I am making a flannel petticoat.

Henry. And I will accompany you, sister, and read aloud some pretty tale to her unfortunate bedridden grandmother.

Lady Fitzherbert. And now, dears, I must bid you all good-bye. (CHILDREN rise and curtsy.) Mrs. Pluperfect, I congratulate you with all my heart upon your faultless family. But—take care! Remember the old saying—

“When he hears a maiden sigh,
‘Would, indeed, I were not I,’
To that little Heart of Sin
Peter Grief will enter in.”

Mrs. Pluperfect and all the little Pluperfects. Peter Grief! Who is Peter Grief?

Lady Fitzherbert. Ah, take care! Take care that you never know;

for where *he* enters the house—there is grief indeed!

[Exit LADY FITZHERBERT.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*The same.* HENRY struts into parlour, removes his hat, takes up a book and glances at title.

Henry. “The Half-Holiday Task-Book, or Mirror of Mind, consisting of Numerous Stories and Interesting Tales in Prose and Verse, calculated to enlighten the Minds and Improve the Hearts of Young Children of either Sex.” (*Seats himself, primly.*) This will be just the book for me. I cannot conceive how any one can read for amusement alone. For myself, I always seek instruction, and strive to profit by the moral lessons which are contained in every book, and reduce them to practice. (*Reads a little.*) It must be very gratifying to my good mamma to possess a child so addicted to study as myself. My youthful playmate, Paul Playful, is almost devoid of intellectual ability, and the acquisition of juvenile knowledge is distasteful to him. Nor is he obliged to attend the Academy like myself, but has a tutor, who does not force him to apply himself to his studies. I sometimes wonder, though, if, on the whole, Master Playful is not happier than myself. (*Pause and a deep sigh.*) I wish I were Paul Playful!

[Loud rapping at door.

Enter SUSAN with a large black-edged card in her hand.

Susan (curtseying). A gentleman has called, Master Henry. I didn't know whether to show him right in or not. He looks sorter strange, Master Henry; in fact, I don't know as he really *is* a gentleman, Master Henry.

Henry (rises, takes card, and haughtily examines it). *Peter Grief!* I do not recollect his name among mamma's acquaintance. But show him in, Susan, and I will hold him in converse until mamma appears.

[Slow music heard without.

HENRY struts once up and down the front of stage and meets PETER GRIEF in centre. Both bow until their heads touch. PETER GRIEF seats himself opposite HENRY, mops his eyes with black-edged pocket-handkerchief.

Henry. Can I assist you, sir, in any way? You appear monstrously afflicted.

Peter Grief. So I am, young sir, so I am. *You*, I suppose, are happy every moment of your life. *(Sighs deeply.)* *You* never have a sad moment, have you?

Henry (sitting very stiffly on edge of chair). No, sir. My mamma says to be good is to be happy, and I am always good.

Peter Grief. You enjoy your studies?

Henry. Certainly, sir; I never weary of my tasks.

Peter Grief. Does not arithmetic trouble you—or spelling—or geography?

Henry. I am equally proficient in them all.

Peter Grief. Do you never feel, on a bright spring day, that you would like to fling down your books, and run out with your hoop or your ball?

Henry. It is wrong to allow my thoughts to stray from duty. *(Stiffness relaxes a little.)* But, yes—perhaps—sometimes—on fine days—

Peter Grief. Do you never suffer from a sort of dejection, a kind of languor—a pain—you know not where—when you set out on Monday mornings for the Academy.

Henry (resumes stiff attitude). Mamma considers that it is commendable in the young to display an eagerness for their studies. We are taught to go forth with smiling faces; but—*(suddenly becomes limp)*—oh, sir, you are right! I have felt it here—and here—*(places his hand on head and waistcoat)*—especially on Mondays.

Peter Grief. And the discipline of your Preceptor? Would you not prefer to have, like your young friend, Master Playful, a mild and indulgent tutor, who never forced you to distasteful tasks when you were disinclined?

Henry (stiffly). We must apply ourselves in youth to the acquisition of useful knowledge. Mamma says so, and mamma—

Peter Grief (aside to audience, derisively). *Mamma!*

Henry. — is always right. But I have felt as you say, sir. *(Becoming limp.)* I find I am often disinclined

for study. It is hard in one's early days to spend so many weary hours in exercise of intellect when one might be—flying the kite—or spinning the top, or following other juvenile pursuits. Oh—I *hate* my tasks! I *hate* them!

[*Bursts into tears, and stamps*
—PETER GRIEF *sobs sympathetically, and wipes HENRY'S eyes with large, black-edged pocket-handkerchief. They walk up and down stage, to slow music. MRS. PLUPERFECT'S voice in distance calls "HENRY!"*

Henry (*tearfully*). How tiresome! There is mamma calling me. I must leave you, sir; but I am overjoyed to make your acquaintance. You speak all my thoughts.

[HENRY and PETER GRIEF *bow until their heads touch. Exit HENRY. PETER GRIEF makes fiendish demonstrations of joy and arranges furniture for next victim. Sits on edge of ottoman in centre of stage.*

Enter LOUISA with her doll.

Louisa. How kind is our dear friend and benefactress, Lady Fitzherbert! She has promised to send us all a cake next week. And I have no doubt it will be of a prodigious size, and elegantly ornamented with sugar icing. (*Sits down on ottoman, with her back to PETER GRIEF, not observing him.*) I do not mean to infer, Lucinda—(*to her doll*)—that my regard for her ladyship is

solely owing to the promise of a cake. How sad a fault is greediness! How glad I am, Lucinda, that I have been taught to despise such errors. No treat can give me pleasure that I cannot share with sisters and brother. Do not cast an envious eye at the dainties on the table, Lucinda. Any other little Miss might help herself; but I know it would be wrong. My youthful playmate, Miss Georgiana Guzzle, has as many sweet cakes as she desires for tea every day. (*Sighs. PETER GRIEF sighs; LOUISA starts, and half turns, then composes herself.*) I wish—I wish I were Georgiana Guzzle!

[*Sighs. PETER GRIEF sighs.*

LOUISA *turns round, and discovers him—sitting with his back to her.*

Louisa. Oh!

Peter Grief. Ah!

Louisa. You gave me such a fright! I do not think, sir, that I have the pleasure of your acquaintance.

Peter Grief. I dare say not. I dare say not. But you *will* have soon. What do introductions matter where there is Affinity of Soul? But you were just saying, were you not, that you envied your young friend, Georgiana Guzzle?

Louisa. It is wicked to be envious, sir. I was merely making some remarks of no consequence to my doll.

Peter Grief (*rises and creeps behind LOUISA, looking satanically over her shoulder*). What tempting-looking cake! And what a long time since

breakfast! Why don't you take some?

Louisa (edging away). It would be dishonest, sir. The cake belongs to my good mamma.

Peter Grief (derisively, aside). Mamma! (*Aloud.*) But your good mamma belongs to you. Therefore, the cake belongs to you, Q.E.D.

Louisa. I hadn't thought of that. Do you think——

[*Looks up doubtfully.*]

Peter Grief. Yes?

Louisa. —that I might——

[*Puts out her hand, then draws it back quickly.*]

Peter Grief (persuasively). Yes.

Louisa. —just taste one?

[*Takes cake, and bites it.*]

Peter Grief. Your mother starves you, poor child!

Louisa. On the contrary, sir, you are mistaken. We have good and wholesome food given to us four times a day, for which mamma says——

Peter Grief (aside). Mamma!

Louisa. —we are very thankful.

Peter Grief. Wholesome! An ugly word. Do you have no puddings?

Louisa. Yes. Rice-puddings.

Peter Grief (pulls a long face). No jam?

Louisa. No. Mamma——

Peter Grief (aside). Mamma!

Louisa. —considers jam injurious to the youthful digestion.

Peter Grief. Don't you know where the jam is kept?

Louisa (mysteriously). In the store-room cupboard.

Peter Grief. You have a right to it. Why don't you take it?

Louisa. O sir! It would be stealing. I would not take it on any account. But I might just put a spoon in—(*slyly*)—and—and lick it. (*MRS. PLUPERFECT in distance calls, "LOUISA!" LOUISA starts.*) Sir, I must leave you. Gracious heavens! All the cakes have vanished! Could I have eaten them? What will mamma say? I wish you good-bye, sir. You are the most sympathetic friend I have ever had. I am positive that there is an Affinity of Soul, and do not regret the lack of introduction.

[*LOUISA curtseys and retires.*]

PETER GRIEF hides in right wing. HARRIET pokes her head around left wing, looks about and enters.

Harriet (peering round the room). Now where can dear little Louisa have got to? Lady Fitzherbert has only now gone, and has promised to bring Miss Augusta next Saturday. (*Sits down with sewing.*) Mamma desires me to set her a good example. It is fortunate for mamma that she has a daughter whose behaviour cannot shame her in the company of ladies of high rank, and who, in spite of her attainments, shows a modest and becoming diffidence. But curtseying so frequently, I must confess, is monstrous fatiguing. Thank you, ma'am! (*Curtseys to imaginary person.*) If you please, ma'am! (*Another curtsey.*) Yes, certainly, 'tis uncommon exhausting. I wish I need not be polite and

elegant when I am not in the mood. I wish I were the Princess Charlotte!

[HARRIET advances up stage curtsying right and left, PETER GRIEF meets her in centre. HARRIET starts and commences another curtsey. PETER GRIEF seizes her hands and places her in a chair.

Peter Grief. No, don't trouble to duck to me. I don't mind. What is the use of all this etiquette and ceremony?

Harriet. I have always been taught, sir, to show deference and respect for my elders.

Peter Grief. To show it. But do you feel it? And, if you don't, is it sincere and right to pretend sentiments that you do not feel?

Harriet. My elegant manners render me an object of universal respect and esteem—but I must confess they are extremely irksome. Were I to be absolutely sincere, as you suggest, it would be excessively mortifying for my friends, as my thoughts do not always tally with my speech.

Peter Grief. Did not your good mamma—(*pulls derisive face behind his hand*)—always encourage you to speak the truth? And if you say what you do not think you will be telling a lie!

Harriet. Sir, as a family we are never, never known to tell a falsehood. Mamma—

Peter Grief (*aside, scornfully*). Mamma!

Harriet. —tells everybody so.

Peter Grief. Then ought you not to speak exactly as you think?

Harriet. Oh, if I but could! If I might say when Aunt Eliza—(*points to silhouette of aunt on wall*)—gives me my sixth work-basket on my birthday, "Aunt, I am not at all obliged to you, and to cast your most unwelcome gift in your very plain face would be amazing distress to me."

Peter Grief. Why not? Why not? Why consider your aunt's feelings? Why consider anybody's feelings?

Harriet. And if, when any of our juvenile acquaintances come to drink tea with us, I might just hint at the time I should like them to go.

Peter Grief. I should—I should.

Harriet. I have often noticed that those acquaintances that you excessively dislike always stay a prodigious long time.

Peter Grief. That is very, very true.

Harriet. O sir, if you only knew how monstrous trying it is for one in my condition of life to have always to be thinking what sort of behaviour would befit an elegantly-brought-up young lady! I had a hundred times rather be anything, I vow, than what I am—a respectable member of a very respectable family. [*Breaks down and sobs.*]

Peter Grief. There, there! My dear young lady! Take my handkerchief; I have several others. (*Presents HARRIET with large black-*

edged handkerchief.) My poor young lady!

[They walk up and down stage together, sobbing.]

Harriet. But I hear footsteps! I must hasten to find that horrid little Louisa and tie on her hateful pinafore. Farewell, sir. I will remember what you said about being sincere. You have done me so much good.

[PETER GRIEF opens door for HARRIET and follows her out.]

Enter JANE from left, carrying a feather-duster. Arranges flowers in a vase.

Jane. Lady Fitzherbert does seem uncommon eager to bring the Hon. Augusta to see us. Dear mamma thinks that our society will be beneficial to her, and I am quite ready to teach her how much more precious are solid virtues than personal attractions. *(Proceeds to dust the room and move furniture.)* I sometimes wonder, though, were I in Augusta's place, if I should care much for solid virtue myself. All her motions distinguished by grace and gentility; her bonnet composed of a most expensive silk. But, has Augusta any more pretensions to beauty than myself? I think not. *(Takes hand-glass.)* Her nose is not so long, nor is it shapely. Her eyes—*(closes one eye at a time and gazes)*—are not so fine. But I cannot expect, even with my superior features, to equal Augusta. She is fashion personified. I must be content with my greater intellectual and moral qualities. But—to ride

in a coach! To wear a necklace of pearls! *(Sinks to the floor.)* Oh, I wish I were the Hon. Augusta!

Enter PETER GRIEF to music, finds JANE kneeling on floor, feather-duster in her hand. Makes motions over her head, then touches her.

Jane. O sir! *(Rises and curtseys hurriedly.)* I will fetch mamma. She cannot know you are here.

Peter Grief. Loveliest of damsels! Do not go, I beg of you.

Jane. Pray, sir, do not use such flattery.

Peter Grief. I speak, fairest miss, nothing but the truth. Your charming face and elegant figure, combined with such sweetness of address, would win a heart of stone!

Jane. I protest, sir!

Peter Grief. Nay, do not protest. I vow that with a little more of fashion in your dress, a greater air of assurance, some jewels here and there, why, you would be the Toast of the County!

Jane. Beauty, sir, my dear mamma always tells us, is as a fleeting flower, and possesses no true value without decorum and virtue. If I am to be commended let it be for my useful accomplishments and helpfulness to dear mamma.

Peter Grief. And do you never wish to change that plain gown for something more elegant? Look—*(hands mirror)*—what a face wasted—what a form!

Jane *(looks long in mirror)*. O sir, do you really think so? But all

this is vanity. If you will kindly excuse me, sir, I must get to my dusting. (*Dusts all round room, sighing.*) Mamma says I must be a daily example of female virtue.

Peter Grief (retreating before duster). When, with a silk gown, a feathered bonnet, and a jewel for that dainty ear, you might have the whole world at your feet ! [*Kneels.*]

Jane (clasps her hands eagerly). Sir, if that could be ! But, alas ! being a young female in dependent circumstances, I must dress accordingly. The daughter of Lady Fitzherbert may flaunt her fashionable attire. Her mamma has so numerous an establishment of servants as renders it unnecessary for her to cultivate acquaintance with domestic affairs ; while I must dust and bake and work my sampler and sew petticoats for the p-p-poor !

[*Bursts into tears.* PETER GRIEF *tries to comfort her.* They *pace up and down.*

Peter Grief. My dearest creature ! Do not spoil those pretty eyes. D'you want a handkerchief ? There —there !

[*Exit PETER GRIEF and JANE to first bars of melancholy music. Re-enter immediately followed by HARRIET, LOUISA and HENRY, each carrying a large black-edged pocket-handkerchief.* CHILDREN dance, PETER GRIEF sobs and groans in background. Throughout the dance children keep up continuous sobbing accompaniment.

ACT III.

SCENE.—*The same.* HENRY *discovered lounging on the parlour sofa.* PETER GRIEF *hidden in a curtain near him.* MRS. PLUPERFECT *seated sewing.*

Mrs. Pluperfect. Lady Fitzherbert should be here by now with the Hon. Augusta. Henry, is it not time to return to the Academy and resume your studies ? I regret, my dear, that you have not, as well as your sisters, a holiday to-day ; but you must bear your disappointments manfully.

Henry (aside to PETER GRIEF). Help me, sir, in this dilemma. I have no notion of going to the Academy to-day. Assist me to some excuse.

Peter Grief. Be a little ill, not ill enough to need a physician, but just poo-orly.

Henry. That, sir, would be a sad lie.

Peter Grief. No, no, Henry, only a slight deviation from the truth.

Henry (feebly). Mamma, do you think I had better go to the Academy to-day ? I don't feel very well.

Mrs. Pluperfect (anxiously). My dearest child ! Let me feel your pulse. No, that is steady. Do you feel any pain ?

Henry. Yes, mamma.

Mrs. Pluperfect. Where is the pain, my son ?

Henry. Everywhere. Here, and here, and here.

[*Pointing to head and throat and waistcoat region.*

Mrs. Pluperfect. We must send for the surgeon.

Henry. Oh no, mamma, I shall be well again to-morrow. I will bear the pain patiently.

Mrs. Pluperfect (bell rings). That must be her ladyship! What shall I do? Lie still, darling, and I will cover you.

[*Flings rug over HENRY.*]

Susan. If you please, ma'am—Lady Fitzherbert and the Hon. Augusta!

Enter LADY FITZHERBERT and the HON. AUGUSTA.

Mrs. Pluperfect. Lady Fitzherbert! Now this is delightful! How charmingly Miss Augusta is looking! My sweet girls have been longing to see you. I cannot think where they can have got to. (*To maid.*) Call the young ladies, Susan.

Lady Fitzherbert. Augusta, too, has been looking forward to this hour. I have ordered a large cake as a treat for your children. John was instructed to bring it from the coach. Ah, here it is!

Enter SUSAN with enormous cake, which she places on table beside HENRY.

Mrs. Pluperfect. This is vastly kind of your ladyship. My children shall thank you themselves. Henry, I regret to say, is indisposed. You must excuse him, Lady Fitzherbert, but I think it is better that Henry should retain the horizontal until he is recovered from his indisposition.

Lady Fitzherbert. I trust you will soon be rid of this malady, Henry.

Henry. I thank you, ma'am.

(*Glancing at cake.*) I do feel slightly better already.

Lady Fitzherbert. I am rejoiced to hear it.

Enter HARRIET.

Ah! here is Harriet.

[*HARRIET curtseys.*]

Augusta (shyly). I have been so looking forward to making your acquaintance. I trust we shall be friends.

Mrs. Pluperfect (to LADY FITZHERBERT). The dear children! We had better leave them to get acquainted.

Harriet. I am exceedingly gratified, Miss Augusta, that you should be so condescending. (*Abruptly.*) Have you any accomplishments?

Augusta. I learn music, drawing, and velvet painting. I am excessively fond of all these pursuits.

Harriet. And I cordially detest them. (*Catches sight of cake.*) La! Is that the cake? How delicious! How entrancing! But—oh—how dull! There's not a particle of almond paste!

Mrs. Pluperfect. Harriet—my dear!

Harriet (flinking her skirts). Well, mamma, what's the good of a cake without almond paste? Why, it's the one part worth eating.

[*Flinks off to extreme left and sits in unladylike attitude.*]

Mrs. Pluperfect (distractedly). I cannot think what has taken the child. Harriet, are you aware that you are sitting with your back to the Hon. Augusta?

Harriet. Yes, mamma. What does it signify? My back is as good as my face!

[*MRS. PLUPERFECT wrings her hands despairingly.*]

Enter JANE decked up in finery.

Mrs. Pluperfect. My elegant Harriet to behave so! But, oh! *what* has come to Jane?

Jane (curtseys). How do you do, ma'am? How do you do, Miss Augusta? How delightful of you to come! I have been positively dying to see you this age. Oh, what a *sweet* bonnet! (*Catches at AUGUSTA'S strings.*) Do allow me to try it on. I am positive it would become me.

[*Tries on AUGUSTA'S bonnet.*]

Mrs. Pluperfect. Jane, where did you get those garments? (*Hysterically.*) Really, your ladyship—

Harriet. La! Jane. You look nothing but a horrid fright!

Jane (fingering all AUGUSTA'S clothes). And the most elegant frock you could conceive! Does your mamma permit you to wear jewels? May I examine your parasol? I declare I wish my mamma would suffer me to dress more in the fashion.

Lady Fitzherbert (aside). "Modesty and retirement are writ upon her features!"

Mrs. Pluperfect. Jane, my darling, you always said—

Harriet. La! mamma, Jane may have said, but people seldom say what they think.

Mrs. Pluperfect. Harriet, what shocking speeches! Where did

you learn that expression "La! mamma"?

Harriet. La! mamma, from you, I have no doubt.

Lady Fitzherbert (aside). "What refinement of speech!" Certainly Harriet shall never be invited to "grace my drawing-room."

Mrs. Pluperfect (rising in great distress). I beg your ladyship will not take it ill. Something strange has happened to my children. They are not themselves. Where can my little Louisa be? *She* will never disappoint me.

Jane. Louisa, mamma, is under the sofa.

Mrs. Pluperfect. Playing with her doll, no doubt, the darling! Come out, Louisa, and speak to the ladies. Do you hear, Louisa? *Louisa*, obey your mamma, and come out at once!

[*LOUISA is dragged out by*

JANE. She clasps a large jam-pot and a spoon, and is covered with stains of jam.

HENRY takes advantage of the bustle to rise and steal a few ornaments off the cake.

Mrs. Pluperfect. I think I must be dreaming. Is *this* my little Louisa?

Lady Fitzherbert (aside). "Greed is not known to her."

Mrs. Pluperfect. Where did you procure that jam-pot, Louisa?

Louisa. From the cupboard, mamma.

Mrs. Pluperfect. Did you not know it was stealing? Are you not ashamed?

Louisa. I had a right to it, mamma. I am not ashamed. I am very glad I've eaten it.

[*Retires to background licking the spoon.*]

Lady Fitzherbert. Perhaps Augusta and I had better withdraw. She is not accustomed to scenes of this kind, and I am anxious to keep her from any harmful influence. (*Sees HENRY again off the sofa stealing ornaments.*) No doubt Henry will accompany us to the carriage. I see he has resumed the perpendicular.

[*All turn towards HENRY, who flings himself back on sofa groaning.*]

Mrs. Pluperfect. Are you feeling better, Henry?

Henry (in whining tone). No, mamma, I have a prodigious pain.

Lady Fitzherbert (advances looking severe). Where is the pain?

Henry (undecidedly). In my—(*glances at PETER GRIEF, who whispers*)—in my—shoulder!

Lady Fitzherbert (examines shoulder). Mrs. Pluperfect, I should advise you to blister this shoulder.

Mrs. Pluperfect. Do you feel unwell in any other way, Henry?

Henry. Yes, mamma, I feel strangely dizzy in my head.

Lady Fitzherbert. Shave his head, madam, and give him some nauseous draught. It is the only remedy. But you feel strong enough to walk, Henry, do you not?

Henry (faintly). No, indeed, ma'am. I have a very acute pain

in my—(*glances at PETER GRIEF, who whispers*)—my left leg!

[*Waves injured leg in the air.*]

Lady Fitzherbert. Mrs. Pluperfect, you must cauterise his left leg.

Henry (sitting suddenly upright). Cauterise! Oh no, indeed! No one shall touch my leg!

[*HENRY leaps off the sofa and rushes out of the room, screaming.*]

Lady Fitzherbert. Come, Augusta. I regret, Mrs. Pluperfect, that our visit has not been a success. I brought Augusta that she might profit by the example of your children, but fear that, should she stay longer, she may be contaminated by them. Come, Augusta.

Jane. You wouldn't take it amiss if I copied that bonnet, Miss Augusta, would you now? I will alter the feathers slightly—just so.

Harriet. You can't expect us to express any regrets at your leaving. Personally, I think you have stayed quite long enough.

Mrs. Pluperfect. At least your ladyship will remain to partake of a little refreshment. Do, I beg of you. Oh, ma'am! Miss Augusta!

[*Rushes after them as they walk haughtily out. JANE follows proudly, HARRIET pointing with rude laughter, and LOUISA strolls out last of all, scraping up remains of jam.*]

Mrs. Pluperfect. I am shamed for life! Lady Fitzherbert will refuse to continue the acquaintance. I shall never, never again be able to

talk to Mrs. Palaver about my intimate friend Lady Fitzherbert. (*Sinks into a chair.*) My situation is truly deplorable. My children, towards whom I cherished feelings of habitual satisfaction, are possessed by evil spirits. And I brought them up so carefully. Why is Lady Fitzherbert so much more fortunate than myself? Rich, titled, and having a pretty, genteel daughter. Oh, I wish I were Lady Fitzherbert!

[*Music is heard, and these words sung behind the scenes:*

"Children, not to you alone

Is the tearful Tempter known.

Older folks, it's our belief,

Sometimes walk with Peter Grief."

Enter PETER GRIEF — exclaims aside, "Mamma!" with diabolical leer. Waves his hands over MRS. PLUPERFECT'S bowed head until music ceases.

Peter Grief. What! Mrs. Pluperfect in tears? Excuse this sudden intrusion, ma'am, but I am an old friend of the family. I knew your mother well, aye, and your grandmother, and have long been awaiting an opportunity to obtain the honour of your acquaintance. My name is Peter Grief!

Mrs. Pluperfect. Peter Grief! (*Aside.*) Where have I heard that name before? Excuse me, sir, I am a little upset.

Peter Grief. I quite understand, ma'am—I quite understand.

Mrs. Pluperfect. And do not know

how to obtain means to extricate myself from my present unfortunate situation.

Peter Grief (*seating himself close to MRS. PLUPERFECT*). Be advised by me, ma'am, *don't try*. Your mistake was to have troubled at all about your children's upbringing. You have been too unselfish. All these forty odd years you have slaved for the good of others—and *this* is the result. Leave off trying to do good, Mrs. Pluperfect. Just please yourself. Get a comfortable chair and some cushions.

[*Rises, places chair, and piles cushions in it.*

Mrs. Pluperfect (*tearfully*). Oh, but I *never* use the front parlour cushions!

Peter Grief. Now a footstool. (*Places footstool.*) Send your maid for some sweetmeats and a light novel. What are these? "Elegant Extracts," "Moral Tales," "Sunday All the Week." Light the fire with these and get something *interesting*.

Mrs. Pluperfect (*eagerly*). Such as "The Bridal Eve," or "Mysterious Warnings," or "Maria the Murderess"?

Peter Grief. The very thing! What you want, Mrs. Pluperfect, is a little self-indulgence. You are a very ill-used woman.

Mrs. Pluperfect. O sir, you are monstrous comforting. Since I lost my dear husband—(*turns to his portrait, PETER GRIEF leers horribly aside*)—no one has been so thoughtful. To think that I should have been so shamed and mortified! I wash

my hands of those children. They may do as they like. Oh—oh—oh!

[*Weeps and walks up and down with PETER GRIEF, who sobs in sympathy.*

Peter Grief. Madam—madam, calm yourself! Here, take my handkerchief, I have another somewhere—

ACT IV.

SCENE.—*The Parlour.* MRS. PLUPERFECT seated in an easy-chair with several cushions, attired in night-cap, dressing-gown, and bedroom slippers. Piles of novels and sweetmeats on a table at her side.

Enter SUSAN with feather-duster.

PETER GRIEF still concealed in room.

Susan. I can't tell what's come to the house. It's ill-wished. There's Miss Jane, as vain as a peacock, Miss Harriet pert as a parrot, Miss Louisa eating her head off, and Master Henry all the time provoking his sisters with cuffs and rude slaps. And there's the mistress—(*points with feather-duster*)—comes down at eleven in the morning in her dressing-gown and bath slippers, and won't lend a hand to help, but just sits and reads shocking tales and crumples the front parlour cushions that's never before been used. And all the fault of that ill-looking gentleman as calls himself Peter Grief. I must contrive to get him out of the house some-

how. He may be in the room at this minute.

[*Lunges round with feather-duster.*

Mrs. Pluperfect (in querulous tones). Susan, haven't you nearly done dusting? It disturbs me and makes a prodigious draught. Pass me "The Mysterious Crime" from that chair. "The Midnight Bell" is not nearly horrid enough. There, how tiresome! I hear the children returning, and shall have no more peace.

[*SUSAN brings large basket of clothes to MRS. PLUPERFECT.*

Mrs. Pluperfect. What is that, Susan?

Susan (holding up stocking with enormous hole). The mending, ma'am.

Mrs. Pluperfect. Take it away. If they tear their clothes they can wear them torn. I shan't mend them. What do you want, Susan?

Susan. The orders for dinner, ma'am.

Mrs. Pluperfect. Give the children some cold mutton, Susan, and bring me a little something tasty here. I'm tired of carving. [*Loud noises heard without.*] Good heavens! My nerves!

Enter the CHILDREN with a rush and great noise. HENRY flings books all over the floor, girls fight. MRS. PLUPERFECT stuffs her fingers in her ears and continues to read.

Louisa. Harriet, stop cuffing me.

Harriet. I didn't cuff you, you idiot!

Henry. Hullo! Mamma's not dressed yet.

Louisa. What's for dinner, mamma?

Jane. Don't pull my dress, Henry, you'll tear it.

Mrs. Pluperfect (peevisly). Remove that head-covering at once, Jane! It looks monstrous ill. How can you have come by it?

Henry. It's an "Ugly," mamma, to make her beautiful.

Jane. They are all wearing them at Brighton. Miss Emma Modish says people are frights when they are sunburnt, and I am determined to save my complexion.

Harriet. You couldn't be more of a fright than you are already, miss!

Louisa (discovering sweetmeats). Oh, peppermints! I just dote on them.

[*Helps herself.*]

Jane. How excessively I dislike grammar! And I was reprimanded by Miss Teachum to-day for not knowing the moods and tenses.

"The mood imperative is, when
Some person we desire"

Harriet. "To do a thing, as go to bed,

Louisa. "Get up,

Henry. "— or stir the fire."

Jane. "The mood potential doth express

What may or can be done.

Henry. "As—you may go, or, I can ride.

Harriet and Louisa. "Or, we can skip and run."

Jane. "The mood subjunctive doth imply

Uncertainty, as thus——"

Harriet. "If it should rain we could not go,

Henry and Louisa. "Nor would they come to us."

Jane. There goes the grammar!

Harriet. And there the geography and spelling!

[*All fling down books and romp around MRS. PLUPERFECT punching and slapping her. PETER GRIEF joins them, dancing fantastically. LOUISA fetches the cake.*]

All. Now for the cake! Mamma, we want the cake.

Mrs. Pluperfect. Children, children, I beg of you to stop! Oh, my nerves! Oh, my poor head!

[*Knock on door. SUSAN enters.*]

Susan. If you please, mistress, there's a little girl a-sitting on the doorstep a-wishing she was the Duke of Wellington!

[*PETER GRIEF emerges from curtain and strides hurriedly out of the room. CHILDREN stop in their romp and change suddenly back to former perfection. ALL sigh with relief.*]

Susan (pointing with feather-duster to saintly family). There! Heaven be praised, he's gone!

Harriet (approaches MRS. PLUPERFECT). Dear mamma, does your head ache? Can I add to your comfort in any way? How inconsiderate of us to disturb you!

Jane. What a sad mess this room is in. I must try to restore it to some sort of order.

Louisa. And I will assist you, dear Jane.

Henry (sits at MRS. PLUPERFECT'S feet). If your head aches, dear mamma, shall I not read some pretty tale aloud to you. What is this? (*Picks up book.*) "Maria the Murderess." Is this an interesting tale, mamma?

Mrs. Pluperfect (sits up hastily and hides the novels). No, no, my son! Bring me "The Parent's Assistant"; but first let me cut you each a slice of Lady Fitzherbert's cake.

Jane. But I do not deserve any.

Harriet. Nor I.

Louisa. Nor I.

Henry. Nor I.

Jane. Mamma, I have been a vain and flighty girl.

Harriet. And I have been pert and impudent to my elders. I have cuffed my little brother and sisters. I have been a sad hoyden.

Henry. I have told a lie.

Louisa. And I have committed a theft—several thefts!

All. And none of us deserve the cake. You must eat it yourself, mamma.

Mrs. Pluperfect (aside). And little I deserve it! (*Aloud.*) No, my dears, I shall never touch it. (*Seats herself in centre.*) We must contrive what is the best use for this unfortunate cake.

Louisa (eagerly). Let us give it to the poor.

Henry. Let us take it to the poor man in Misery Street, who is so afflicted with the indigestion!

Jane and Harriet. Oh! will you allow us, mamma?

Henry. We will take it this very afternoon in a basket, and I will read aloud to him out of an Improving Book.

Jane, Harriet, and Louisa. How delighted he will be!

Mrs. Pluperfect (beaming round on them). Dear children! Always so thoughtful for others. Louisa and Harriet shall carry the cake, and Jane shall take him the comforter she knitted, and Henry shall read portions of "The Fairchild Family" aloud. Oh! I am singularly blessed in my children. *I envy no one in the world.*

[*Tableau.* MRS. PLUPERFECT in centre, little PLUPERFECTS grouped around her. SUSAN chases PETER GRIEF across background.]

A contented dame you see,
With her Saintly Familee.
Peter Grief has left the four
Even better than of yore.

Yes, we find we're even more
Perfect than we were before!

Grievous Peter hates to see
Calm, contented hearts—and we
Draw deep sighs of pure relief,
That we've cast out Peter Grief.

Susan.

Yes, indeed—we'd just as lief
Bar the doors on Peter Grief.

All.

Peter, Peter, PETER GRIEF!

CURTAIN.

ROMANCE DE LA MONTAGNE

PAR M. K. B. WARD ET E. PERROCHET

THIS little French play is divided into three scenes, all of which take place amongst the mountains. The same scenery will suffice throughout—indeed, if desired, the second and the first scene can be run into one, a short space only elapsing between



FIG. 1



FIG. 2



FIG. 3

the exit of Jean and the entrance of the girls. A suitable back-cloth will be that described in connection with "King Uggermugger," as the top of the Inaccessible Mountains can be applied to almost any mountain scene.

COSTUMES

The Four Sailors can be dressed very simply in large baggy breeches and blouses, Fig. 1. On their heads they should have little round caps, with red balls in the centre.

Jeannette and her three friends can wear dresses similar to that shown in Fig. 2. This costume consists of a plain bodice and skirt, the sleeves of the former being turned back to the elbow, a white collar and plain white head-dress. They should wear clean white aprons and heavy sabots.

The Four Spirits of the Mountain will require costumes in some way characteristic of their natures. Twilight may wear a grey silk frock with grey stockings and shoes; over her head and shoulders, partly concealing her face, should be a fine gauze veil of a shade to match her dress. The Mountain Spring should wear a pale blue costume, similar to that of Twilight. She will need no veil, but should have her hair free, her head being encircled with a garland of moss. A very effective costume could be made of any material resembling water-wave silk.

Echo's costume, exactly similar in shape to that of the two former spirits, can be of pure white, her hair being confined within a gold fillet. Dawn may wear a rose-coloured dress, with stockings and shoes to match. She should carry a veil like that of Twilight, of pink or some equally suitable colour.

The Brigands.—These characters may wear check shirts and baggy trousers, with large red sashes tied in a loose knot round their waists. In these sashes, pistols, knives, and other paraphernalia of villainy may be stuck. Upon their heads should be handkerchiefs knotted in true brigand style, whilst large ear-rings may be clipped to the lobes of the ears.

The suggestions for costumes here given are based upon those usually worn by peasants in the North of France. Personal experience or a study of pictures may suggest various alterations, which can be effected with little trouble. The play is so short that complicated costumes are not worth making.

ROMANCE DE LA MONTAGNE

PERSONNAGES.

JEAN	}	<i>Matelots.</i>
SYLVESTRE		
CLAUDE		
ANTOINE		
JEANNETTE	}	<i>Bergères.</i>
MARION		
FRANÇOISE		
JAQUELINE		
LE CRÉPUSCULE	}	<i>Esprits des montagnes.</i>
LA SOURCE		
L'ECHO		
L'AUREORE		
ROBERT	}	<i>Brigands.</i>
JACQUES		
ALEXANDRE		

SCÈNE.—*Dans les Montagnes,*

SCÈNE PREMIÈRE.

Jean. Il me semble que j'ai perdu mon chemin, je ne reconnais plus ces sentiers et je ne peux plus retrouver la route qui doit me conduire au port où mon bateau m'attend, bercé par les vagues. Ah ! oh !—personne ne répond, je suis fatigué, j'ai faim, j'ai soif, j'ai marché toute la journée, et la nuit commence à venir. Que dois-je faire, où tourner mes pas ? Oh ! je suis si las—(*il baille*)—il faut que je me repose un peu.

(*Il se couche sur la mousse et s'endort.*)

Le Crépuscule (entre chantant ; elle voit JEAN). Pauvre petit matelot ! Qu'il a l'air fatigué ; je me demande d'où il vient ? Pour le moment repose-toi tranquillement sur ce tendre tapis vert ; les Esprits des montagnes te garderont et je vais faire descendre sur toi les voiles de la nuit.

[On entend le murmure d'une cascade derrière la scène et LA SOURCE entre.

Chut, chut, ma sœur, nous avons ici un petit dormeur.

La Source. Ses habits sont couverts de poussière, son visage pâle et ses lèvres sèches ; je vais les rafraîchir un peu.

[Elle se penche et de l'eau d'une coquille qu'elle a à la main, elle humecte les lèvres de JEAN.

L'Echo. Mes sœurs, que faites-vous si tranquilles ? *(Elle aperçoit JEAN.)* Qui est cet étranger ?

La Source. Un brave matelot qui a besoin de notre aide.

L'Echo. Mon aide ! que puis-je faire pour lui ? Moi, pauvre Echo de la montagne !

La Source. Il a perdu son chemin.

L'Echo. Je lui aiderai—*(se tournant du côté de JEAN)*—quand tu te réveilleras, je porterai ta voix de colline en colline, et sûrement quelqu'un t'entendra et viendra à ton secours.

[Les trois Esprits exécutent une danse, puis se couchent et s'endorment autour de JEAN.

L'Aurore. J'apporte les rayons du soleil, la clarté et la lumière

d'un nouveau jour. Réveillez-vous mes sœurs, il est grand temps de vous cacher dans vos retraits.

[Elle les touche avec un bâton et chacune se retire silencieusement. Après quelques instants JEAN se réveille et s'étirant regarde autour de lui.

Jean. Où suis-je ? Était-ce un rêve ? *(Il se lève.)* Que je me sens frais et dispos, je vais essayer d'appeler de nouveau, quelqu'un m'entendra peut-être—Ah ! oh ! *(Derrière la scène l'Echo répond faiblement, " Ah ! oh ! ")* Voilà l'écho qui me répond. *(On entend le son de cloches.)* Qu'est ceci ? Des cloches ! Il doit y avoir quelque berger près d'ici, le son venait de ce côté, je vais suivre ce chemin qui aboutira, je suppose, à une ferme. *[Il sort.*

SCÈNE DEUXIÈME.

Marion. Oh ! qu'il fait beau ce matin sur la montagne ; l'air est frais et le ciel pur. Eh ! Bonjour, Françoise et Jeannette.

Françoise et Jeannette. Bonjour, Marion.

Jeannette. Déjà arrivée, vous êtes la première aujourd'hui.

Françoise. Jacqueline est encore bien loin ; ses vaches sont mutines ce matin.

Jeannette. Qu'il fait chaud ! Reposons-nous un peu.

Jaqueline (arrivant essouffée). Enfin me voilà ! m'ont elles donné de la peine, ces coquines. *(Se jette par terre.)* Oh ! que c'est délicieux de

pouvoir s'étendre dans cette herbe odorante. [*Elles chantent.*]

Marion (*prenant ses compagnes par la main*). Venez, nous allons danser un peu.

Jaqueline, Françoise, et Jeannette. Oui, oui, la danse des cloches !

[*Elles prennent chacune une cloche et exécutent une danse ; elles s'arrêtent tout à coup entendant un appel.*]

(*Les quatre ensemble.*) Qu'est-ce que c'est ?

Jeannette. C'est l'Echo.

Jean (*entrant*). Bonjour, mesdemoiselles, quel plaisir de voir enfin quelqu'un. J'ai perdu mon chemin et j'ai dormi toute la nuit à la belle étoile : ce matin comme j'essayais de retrouver ma route le son de vos cloches m'a été apporté par l'écho.

[*Les jeunes filles, d'abord un peu effrayées, se rassurent à ce discours.*]

Jeannette (*avec un air mystérieux*). Ah ! oui, les Esprits des montagnes sont toujours si bons envers les pauvres voyageurs.

Jean. Hélas ! je n'ai pas le temps de bavarder ; il faut que je me dépêche pour arriver au port avant ce soir. Pouvez-vous me montrer le chemin, gentilles fillettes ?

Les jeunes filles. Mais oui, certainement.

Marion. Venez par ici, c'est le chemin le plus court.

[MARION, FRANÇOISE, et JAQUELINE sortent premièrement et JEAN, offrant sa main à JEANNETTE, suit.]

SCÈNE TROISIÈME.—*Trois mois plus tard.*

FRANÇOISE, JAQUELINE, et MARION *faisant une guirlande.*

Françoise. La première guirlande finie doit être pour Jeannette, comme c'est son anniversaire aujourd'hui.

Marion. La voici prête, où est Jeannette ? (JEANNETTE *entre.*) Ah ! la voilà ; viens ici, Jeannette, nous allons te couronner.

[*Elle pose la couronne sur la tête de JEANNETTE.*]

Jaqueline. Maintenant asseyons-nous et commençons notre petite fête.

Françoise. Voici la place d'honneur.

Marion. Regarde ce panier de fruits que je t'ai apporté.

Jeannette. Merci beaucoup ; quel joli repas nous aurons aujourd'hui !

Marion. Voici des fraises que j'ai cueillies ce matin.

Jeannette, Jaqueline, Françoise. Oh ! que cela va être délicieux.

[*Elles mangent.*]

Jeannette. Que pensez-vous que j'ai reçu ce matin ?

Les autres. Dis-le-nous vite. Qu'est-ce que c'est ?

Jeannette (*tirant une lettre de sa poche*). Une lettre de Jean le matelot, qui s'était perdu dans nos montagnes il y a trois mois.

Jaqueline. Que dit-il ?

Jeannette (*lisant*).

"CHÈRE JEANNETTE,—Après trois longs mois de voyage parmi les mers lointaines, je suis de retour au pays, et j'espère venir vous voir aussitôt que j'aurai mon congé. Je n'ai

jamais oublié tout ce que vous et vos compagnes ont fait pour moi et espère un jour vous prouver ma reconnaissance.—Votre dévoué,
JEAN LAROCHE.

P.S.—Quelques-uns de mes amis m'accompagneront peut-être.

Françoise. Quel bonheur ! Pen-
sez-vous qu'ils viendront bientôt ?

Marion. Si seulement ils venaient aujourd'hui, comme nous nous amuserions !

[Soudain on entend un grand bruit et trois brigands entrent sur la scène. Ils se jettent sur les jeunes filles, les lient, puis essayent de les emporter.]

Alexandre. Vite, une corde ici.

Jaqueline. Laissez-nous, je vous en prie.

Jacques. Taisez-vous. Robert, prenez ces mouchoirs et baillonnez-les.

Les bergères. Au secours ! au secours !

Robert. Voici la dernière cordelée.

Jacques. Emmenez-les dans la caverne pendant que nous volons les vaches.

Françoise. Ayez pitié de nous, Monsieur.

[Tout à coup on entend un chant de matelots, le son se rapproche peu à peu et JEAN et ses trois amis entrent. Ils tirent trois ou quatre coups de fusil ; à ceci les brigands se sauvent.]

Jean. Allons, vite, mes amis, déliions ces pauvres jeunes filles.

Claude. Voici mon couteau, cela ira plus vite.

Sylvestre. Ces monstres ! Attaquer ainsi ces innocentes jeunes filles, sans aucune défense.

Jaqueline. Ah ! merci, Monsieur ; j'ai pensé que ma dernière heure était venue.

Antoine. Oui, nous sommes arrivés juste au bon moment.

Marion. Quel bonheur d'avoir un peu d'air.

Jeannette. Jean, mon brave, est-ce vraiment vous qui nous avez sauvées ? Merci mille fois !

Jean. Nous sommes heureux d'avoir fait quelque chose pour vous et le serions encore plus si nous avions attrapé ces coquins.

Françoise. Hélas ! et nous nous amusions justement si bien quand ces brigands sont arrivés et ont tout bouleversé.

Marion (aux matelots). Car vous savez c'est l'anniversaire de Jeannette et nous avons une petite fête en son honneur.

Claude. Oubliez tout ce qui vient de se passer et continuons d'être gai et heureux.

Les bergères. Oh ! oui, dansons un peu.

Jean (à JEANNETTE). Vous souvenez-vous de la danse des cloches ?

FIN.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

BY BERTHA M. SKEAT, PH.D.

THE greater part of this play takes place by the seashore, and with few alterations the back-cloth, illustrated in Fig. 1, can be utilised for most of the scenes. A plain stretch of sand descends to the water's edge, whilst in the distance a rocky headland runs out to sea across the bay. The wings upon either side, Fig. 2, should be painted to represent boulders of rock covered here and there with wisps

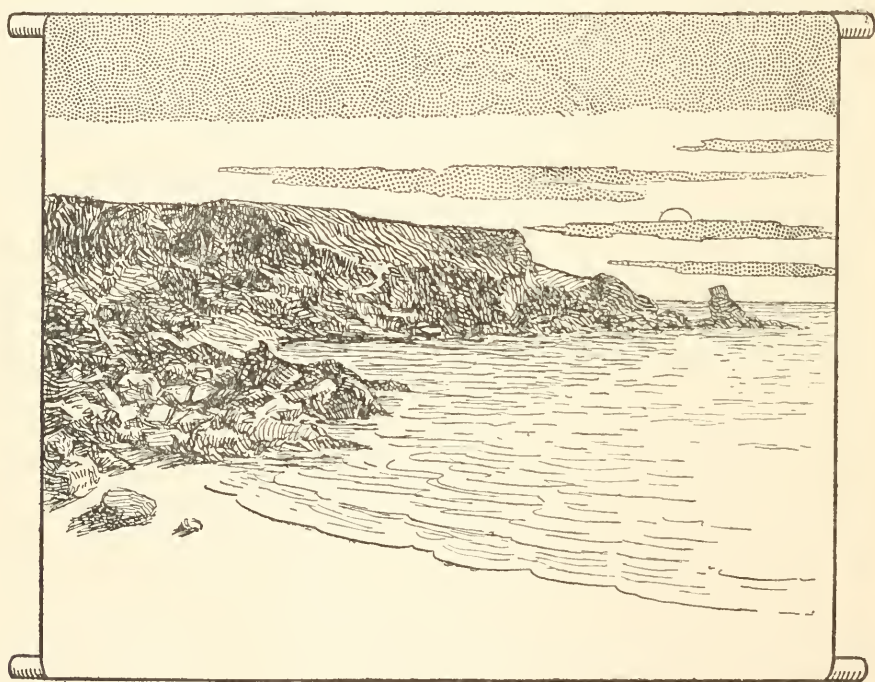


FIG. 1

of dried seaweed blown in by a recent storm. In the left centre of the stage should be a low rock, which can be made of a packing-case draped with seaweed made of brown serge. Beside it must be a sponge bath to form a pool, the tin edges being concealed from the audience by a heap of stones, oyster-shells, and seaweed.

The action of Scene I. takes place under the sea, and the stage arrangements for the Act I. in "Pearl in Coral Hall" will prove admirably adapted for the purpose. It must not be forgotten that a green gauze sheet should be let down right across the front of the stage to give the effect of being beneath the water.

The scenery illustrated in Fig. 1 will serve for the second scene and interlude, Interlude IV., the fifth scene (where the stage must be dark), and the second tableau. In the second interlude there must be a blackboard with the inscription:—

EPITAPH.

Affliction sore long time I bore,
And cramming was in vain,
Till Heaven did please
My woes to ease
With water on the brain.

In Scene V. a high rock made of a flat will have to be introduced, and from its shelter the mermaid, concealed below the waist, will lean out.

The third scene takes place at the entrance of the Witch's cave, which is under the sea, and will therefore necessitate the use of the gauze curtain. The scenery can be made very similar to that already described in "Pearl in Coral Hall," with a number of long green ribbons to represent Polypi hanging from the flies.

The interior of a room in the castle, which is the setting for Scene IV., can be adapted from the room described in "Snowdrop and the Seven Dwarfs," the only difference being that in place of the thrones there should be a handsome couch against the wall.

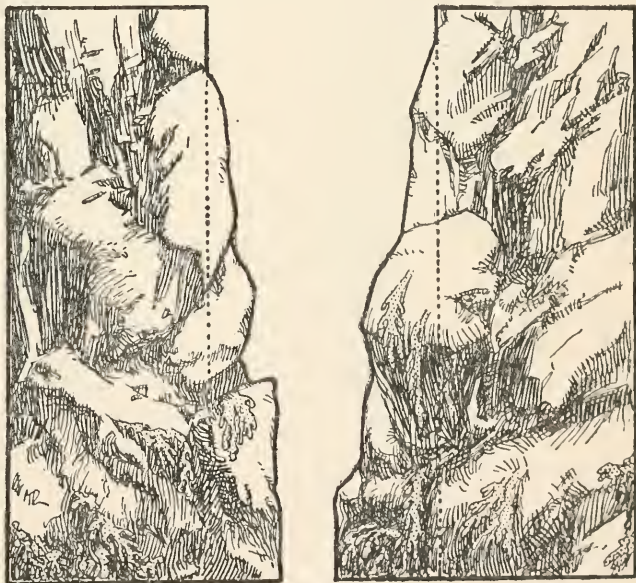


FIG. 2

The Tableaux.—Of the two tableaux here described, one only should be produced—preferably the latter. The first tableau represents the mermaid lying under the ocean, with the sea-nymphs around her. The second, which is aptly called the Apotheosis of Self-sacrifice, shows the three Air-spirits bending to lift up the mermaid, who, robed in pure white, kneels on the sand. The whole stage should, if possible, be lit up with a soft rose-coloured light to represent the approaching dawn, whilst unseen voices sing, "Light after Darkness."

COSTUMES

The Queen Grandmother.—A dark green velveteen gown, cut square at the neck, trimmed with gold and with a long train, will prove a very suitable costume for this lady. Upon her head she should wear a golden crown, whilst a string of pearls may be around her neck.

Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid should be made up as an old lady with white corkscrew curls peeping out from beneath a black bonnet, Fig. 3; she may wear a black



FIG. 3



FIG. 4

dress with a white apron and a white shawl, and carry a somewhat bulky umbrella and bag.

The Four Mermaids may be dressed in frocks of sea-green art muslin spangled here and there with silver sequins. For this play such a costume will prove rather more suitable than that described for the mermaid in "Pearl in Coral Hall."

Little Mermaid.—The dress for this character should be in a simple Greek style, with green ribbon streamers falling from the shoulders. This dress must be white, and around her head a wreath of seaweed may be woven.

The Witch can wear a costume similar to that described in "The Snow Queen."

The Prince.—A very suitable white and gold dress for the Prince would be that of Prince Sunlight in "The Frozen Palace."

The Princess.—A pretty white costume similar to that described for Princess Aurora in the above-mentioned play will prove suitable for this girl. There is, of course, ample opportunity for making alterations or improving any of these costumes, and the suggestions here given are merely to aid the stage-manager in preparing the piece.

The Attendant.—A saffron muslin costume cut after the same style as the Princess's dress, although very much simpler in design, will serve for this character.

The Water-babies.—As some difficulty will be experienced in providing a suitable costume for the Water-babies, an idea of how the problem may be solved is shown in Fig. 4. A pink frock hangs from the shoulders to the knees, with frills reaching half-way to the elbow; over this, imitation seaweed made of green cloth is hung, with little pink frills round the wrist. The stockings and shoes are pink, the latter having little frills around the ankles. Tom can wear short pink breeches in place of the long frock.

The Air-spirits should wear filmy robes of some light pale blue material, their shoulders being adorned with silver wings, whilst long veils, draped round the head, fall over the shoulders.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

CHARACTERS.

QUEEN GRANDMOTHER.
MRS. BEDONEBYASYOUDID.
GALATEA
THETIS
CORAL
PERI
LITTLE MERMAID.
WITCH.
PRINCE.
PRINCESS.
ATTENDANT.
TOM.
SIX WATER-BABIES.
THREE AIR-SPIRITS.

PROLOGUE.—*The WATER-BABIES' Drill.*
The Little MERMAID and the WATER-BABIES.

SCENE I.—*The MERMAID's Début.*

INTERLUDE I. { *The Lobster Quadrille.*
WATER-BABIES' *Dance.*

SCENE II.—*The MERMAID rescues the PRINCE.*

INTERLUDE II.—*In the Land of Tom-toddies.*

SCENE III.—*The MERMAID and the SEA-WITCH.*

INTERLUDE III.—*WATER-BABIES and MRS. BEDONEBYASYOUDID.*

SCENE IV.—*The MERMAID in the Palace.*

INTERLUDE IV.—*The Forsaken MERMAN.*

SCENE V.—*The MERMAID's Self-sacrifice.*

TABLEAU I.—*Under the Sea.*

TABLEAU II. *The Apotheosis of Self-sacrifice.*

PROLOGUE.—*By the Seashore.*

Enter seven WATER-BABIES, running and jumping, and take up drill positions on stage.

SONG.

I.

We are seven little Water-babies,
With pretty little pale pink frill,
And if you will applaud and not think us
all a fraud
We'll show you a Water-baby drill.

II.

We are seven little Water-babies,
And we wriggle with a right good will ;
But if it makes you faint, or feel shivery
and quaint,
You'd better take a Pale Pink Pill !

III.

The joy of the Water-babies
Is water—you can take your fill,
You can drink it day by day, you can
bathe in it and play,
And you won't get a shiver-quiver chill.
[Throw water about.]

IV.

We pity all you poor Land-babies
Who cannot swim a river or a gill ;
If you suffer from rheumatics, economics,
hydrostatics,
You had better join our Water-baby
drill.

V.

We are seven little Water-babies
With pretty little pale pink frill ;
And we'll have a little dance, and a
caper, and a prance,
While the Land-babies practise sitting
still.

[Tune continued ; they polka round the stage, then fall into drill

position. Music drill. When the drill is ended, they cry :

Babies. She's coming ! the little mermaid is coming ! Our playfellow is coming !

[All prostrate themselves in Eastern fashion.]

Enter LITTLE MERMAID.

Little Mermaid. And how are you, you dear naughty children ?

Babies. Oh, we're all very spruce and frilly, thank you. Come along and play with us, do !

[They pull her till she sits down in the middle ; then clamber round her, catch her hands, and sit at her feet. TOM stands staring at them with his thumb in his mouth.]

Little Mermaid. And who are you, you little darling ?

Babies. Oh, that is the new Water-baby, and he never had any mother.

Little Mermaid. Then I will be his mother, and he shall have the very best place. Go away, all of you.

[Takes TOM on her knee.]

Babies (clustering round her). Sing us a song ! Sing us a song !

Little Mermaid. Well, I have time for only one. What shall it be ?

Babies. "Clear and cool, clear and cool."

[LITTLE MERMAID comes forward and sings Kingsley's Song while TOM sits at her feet blowing soap-bubbles. (Music by Dolores.) BABIES clap their hands.]

Little Mermaid. Now you must

all run away; and you, Tom, will you be a good boy for my sake, and torment no more sea-beasts till I come back?

Tom. Yes, if you will play with us again.

Little Mermaid. Of course I will! Now, little frogs, hop away, hop away!

[*Exeunt BABIES, hopping like frogs. LITTLE MERMAID steps on to the rock and gazes at herself in a mirror.*]

Little Mermaid. Only to think that in five hours' time I shall really be fifteen years old, and shall be allowed to go up to the surface of the ocean and take a first glimpse of the wonderful, beautiful world above!

CURTAIN.

Barcarolle—"Oberon" (Weber).

SCENE I.—*Under the Sea, a throne.*

GRANDMOTHER seated combing LITTLE MERMAID'S hair; four sisters grouped round—GALATEA, CORAL, THETIS, PERI.

Grandmother. Well, my dear children, I am beginning early, you see, to get our little Lurline ready for her coming out to-day. I hope you think her appearance will do your old Grandmother credit?

Sisters. Oh yes, Granny, we are quite sure of that.

Grandmother (anxiously). I am afraid, though, she has hardly enough dignity for a maiden fifteen years old. (*To LURLINE.*) I wish you would imitate your sisters' deportment a little more, my dear!

Coral, you might show her how to swim across a cave gracefully.

Coral. Certainly, Grannie dear.

[*She crosses the room slowly.*]

Grandmother. Now, Lurline, you must try to move more like that. Your sister does great credit to Mr. Flounder's swimming lessons.

Lurline. Yes, I'll try—I'll try; but I feel so excited, Granny, I don't know what to do with myself.

Grandmother. Perhaps you had better all tell her something about what you yourselves found the world like on your own coming of age. It might help her to realise what to expect. Galatea, you begin.

Galatea. My first experience was a lovely one. I found myself lying on a sandbank in the moonlight, looking across to a large town. The lights of the city shone like stars, and I heard beautiful music, the noise of carriages and horses, and the voices of men. Just because I could not go up there and mingle with the crowd, I wanted to do it—oh, so much!

Grandmother. You should never be so foolish as to want what you can't get, and then you will always get what you want. Now, Coral, tell us what did you see?

Coral. I rose to the surface of the ocean just at sunset, and the whole sky was glowing like gold. Crimson and violet clouds were floating across the heavens, and a flock of white swans was flying towards the setting sun. I tried to follow them and reach it, but it sank below the waves, and the rosy glow faded from the sky and sea.

Grandmother. So you found it best to come back to our land, where the sun never shines, and in consequence never goes out! Well, Thetis, what was *your* first experience of the world?

Thetis. Oh, I was bolder than any of the rest, for I swam right up a broad river, past hills and forests and beautiful castles. At last I came to a sandy shore, where some little pink human children were playing in the water. I wanted to play with them, but they ran away, and a small black animal came and made such an atrocious noise at me that I fled back to the open sea.

Grandmother. If you don't know whether a thing is dangerous or not it is always wisest to run away first, and find out afterwards, for then you will always keep on the safe side, anyhow. That was bravely done, my Thetis! Now, Peri, what can *you* tell us about the world?

Peri. I think it is a very cold place. I found myself sitting on the top of an iceberg, drifting across the sea. And the sky went all black, and a big storm came up, and the lightning made such a fearful noise that I was glad to get back comfortably under the waves again.

Grandmother. Well, now you have all seen the world, would you rather live there than here?

Sisters. Oh no, no! It was all very well when it was a new sensation; but now we may go there whenever we like, we find it is much nicer down below.

Singing.

'Mid pleasures and palaces, tho' we may roam,

Be it ever so humdrum there's no place like home.

The crabs and the lobsters they come at our call,

But give us our old Gran, who is dearer than all.

Home, home, sweet, sweet home,

Be it ever so humdrum, there's no place like home.

Grandmother. Now, Lurline, do you still want to go up and see the world after all this?

Lurline. Yes, oh yes. Why, I want to see it all the more, just because they say it's not so very interesting after all. Please *mayn't* I have a new sensation, like all the others?

Grandmother. Yes, certainly. You must take your own wilful way, as all the young folk do nowadays. They call it the Discipline of Consequences in the Upper World, but I consider there is more consequences than discipline about it. Now if you feel quite ready—(*arranging her robe*)—we will go with you part of the way, but I don't care to roam too far from my comfortable oyster-bed in these days, as I prefer common sense to *uncommon* sensations. Come along, dear children.

[*Exeunt.*]

INTERLUDE I.—*The Lobster Quadrille.*

"Will you walk a little faster?"

Words from "Alice in Wonderland."

Recitation by NYMPHS and WATER-BABIES, who meanwhile dance the first figure of a quadrille.

WATER-BABIES' DANCE.

SCENE II.—*The Rescue.*

LITTLE MERMAID *sitting on a rock.*
PRINCE *lying at the edge of the water.*

Little Mermaid. How delightful it is sitting here in the warm sunshine, after all that big storm last night! What a dreadful thing it was to see that great ship dashed on the rocks, and all the people in the water, and that poor handsome young Prince! I am so afraid he must have been drowned after all! Oh dear, it is really getting too hot here to be quite pleasant, but I must never let my sisters know that, they would think I was so *very* new! Let me see if I cannot find a nice little pool of sea-water to sit down in.

[*Rises and looks about. Sees the PRINCE.*

Little Mermaid. Oh, here is that beautiful Prince lying at the edge of the waves! I do wonder if he is still alive! I must get him up on to the dry land somehow, or else he will die.

[*Drags him higher ashore, and examines him carefully.*

Little Mermaid. He seems scarcely to breathe, but his heart is still beating! Oh what shall I do to bring him back to life? (*Takes his head in her arms.*) My Prince, my dearest love, come back to me!

[*Kisses his lips.*

Prince (waking). Is this fairyland, and are you my guardian-spirit, or am I still dreaming?

Little Mermaid. No, it is not a dream. You are still safe on earth, and I have saved you.

Prince. Saved me? Oh, my sweet deliverer, I shall be grateful to you all my life.

[*Kisses her fingers and faints away again.*

Little Mermaid. He has fainted again, but I daren't leave him to go and get help; besides, what mortal would believe a mermaid's story? Oh, I do wish some one would come! I would not mind if they took him away from me, if they would only save his life!

[*Chafes his hands. Voices, unseen, heard chanting and approaching nearer.*

AIR.—“*Gaudeamus igitur*” (Scottish Student's Song-book).

Voices.

*Gaudeamus igitur, juvenes dum sumus,
Post jucundam juventutem, post molestam senectutem,
Nos habebit humus, nos habebit humus.*

*Vivat academia, vivant professores,
Vivat membrum quod libet, vivant
Membra quæ libet : semper sint in flore.*

Little Mermaid (listening). They are coming nearer! I must step behind a rock, or else they will be afraid of me. Then I can watch and see if they will save him. Good-bye, my Prince.

[*Kisses his brow and disappears.*

Enter PRINCESS and ATTENDANT.

Princess. What is that white thing lying on the shore? Go and see!

Attendant. Please, your Royal Highness, I'm afraid!

Princess. Afraid! And pray what are you afraid of?

Attendant. Please, your Royal Highness, because I don't know what it is.

Princess. How can you be afraid of a thing when you don't know what it is? And if you *did* know, should I send you to find out? These are ridiculous excuses. Go at once!

[ATTENDANT approaches PRINCE timidly, utters a faint shriek and rushes back.

Princess (impatiently). Well, what's the matter now?

Attendant. Please, your Royal Highness, it's a MAN.

Princess. And suppose it is. Have you never seen a man in your life before?

Attendant. Please, your Royal Highness, he is dead.

Princess. In that case, we had better arrange about his funeral. Follow me.

[*She approaches the PRINCE and bends over him.*

Princess. It is *not* a man, but a Prince, and he is *not* dead, but asleep from exhaustion. (*Touches him.*) Prince, awake! It is I, the Princess!

Prince (waking). The Princess—my deliverer!

Princess. Yes, your deliverer, if you will have it so. Rise up and

come with me to my father's palace. (*To ATTENDANT.*) Give him your arm. (*To PRINCE.*) You shall stay with us till you are quite recovered, and then you shall tell us all your adventures. [*Exeunt.*

Music of Gounod's Song—"When all was Young."

Re-enter LITTLE MERMAID, looks around distractedly, and stands in tableau position of despair.

CURTAIN.

INTERLUDE II.—*The Seashore of the land of Tomtoddies.*

Enter WATER-BABIES, and rush up to the memorial stone of a Tomtoddy. TOM follows them.

Tom. I say, you Water-baby fellows, where are you taking me to?

Babies (chanting, Tune "Oranges and Lemons"). To the Isle of Tomtoddies,

All heads and no bodies.

Tom. Dear me, I hope we're not all going to grow like that. Whatever makes them go off that way?

Babies (chanting). They are taught by much cramming,
With no shirking nor shamming.

Tom. What a very disastrous state of things! And what is this old monument doing up here?

Babies (intone, reading inscription). Here lie the bones of a poor Tomtoddy,

He was one big head and a very little body.

Tom. Did his body go off its head, then? But stop, here is the epitaph.

[*Reads in a high monotone.*

"Affliction sore long time I bore,
And cramming was in vain,
Till Heaven did please my woes
to ease

With water on the brain."

Water! Now *I* should have thought
it would have been too much *bier*.
Did he *really* die of that?

Babies (chant). Of examination fever.
He was thought to be clever,
But his brain grew quite soft,
And he went up aloft.

Tom. Oh come, I say, really now,
is it catching?

[BABIES *chant*, while two
BABIES, ticketed "PASS"
and "FAIL," take hands,
and the others pass under, as
in "Oranges and Lemons."

When the Locals are sitting
To examine all fitting
In the month of December,
Our Exam., please remember!
Be it written or oral,
We will hope it won't floor all;
You must pass, or be ploughed—
Which is seldom allowed.

Here comes a paper to put you to bed—
Here comes a question to chop off the
last—last—last man's head.

[*They tug for victory*. PASS wins
easily.

Tom (pointing to side). Look! the
Examiner's coming!

EXAMINER *in cap and gown enters*
from side. WATER-BABIES *form*
in a half-circle and sing.

Chorus.

Hush, the Examiner's coming!
Oh! the Examiner's coming!
Cave canem, cave canem,
Oh! the Examiner's coming!

No. 1 recites.

Hush! the Examiner's coming! Oh, give
us plenty of facts!

Who signed Magna Charta? And how
do you think it acts?

Hark! indeed he is coming!—Oh, how
do you wash by rule?

Please, can you cook a Statement, and
serve up an April fool?

Chorus (sing). Hush, the Examiner's
coming, &c.

No. 2 recites.

I love him, thou lov'st him, she loves
him; we love him, you love him,
they don't.

What are the rules of Syntax? And
when may you say, *I won't*?

Hush! the Examiner's coming! Oh, tell
him how sharp we are!

What was the name, if you please, of the
first Prince of Wales' Papa?

Chorus. Hush, the Examiner's coming,
&c.

No. 3 recites.

J'aime, tu aimes, il aime; nous aimons,
vous aimez, ils aiment.

Who wrote the Mabinogion? Oh, can't
you give us a name?

Hush, the Examiner's coming! Oh, who
was the oldest man?

Mention the Kings of Judah, in order as
far as you can.

Chorus (sing). Hush, the Examiner's
coming, &c.

No. 4 recites.

Amo, amas, amat; amamus, amatis,
amant.

How do you do Subtraction? 10 cakes
from 2 boys, I *can't*!

Please, sir, what are the dates of Elizabeth,
Mary, and James?

What are the seaports of Wales? I've
quite forgotten their names!

Chorus (sing twice). Oh, oh, the Examiner's coming, &c.

[They skip, singly, twice round the stage to the music, and exeunt.]

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.—*The WITCH's Cave.*

Enter LITTLE MERMAID.

Little Mermaid. Oh, however shall I get by these fearful creatures! They will grasp me with their long waving arms and strangle the life out of me in a moment! See there—the bones of some unfortunate victim! And that tress of shining hair! It must have been some poor little mermaid like myself. Just imagine the ghastly feelers clawing round one's throat. Shall I go back? *(Pause.)* No, no, I cannot—I want so much to go on living for ever. I will risk my three hundred years for the sake of it.

[She passes through the grove and sinks fainting at entrance of cave. WITCH appears.]

Witch. You wretched little shrimp, be off out of my grounds this moment, or I will give you something to go for.

Little Mermaid (kneeling). Oh, pardon, good mother! I have come on this terrible journey to ask just one question, which only you are wise enough to answer.

Witch (mollified, aside). Hm! not quite such a fool as she looks! *(To MERMAID.)* Well, don't attitudinise, it's wasted on me. Get up on your

tail at once, and let us have it straight out.

Little Mermaid (rising). Please tell me, what can I do to go on living for ever?

Witch. There is only one way to do that. You must go up to live in the upper world like the mortals do.

Little Mermaid. Do you think the Prince would let me go to live in his castle?

Witch. Not with that caudal appendage. It is not the fashion in the upper world to glide about a drawing-room, or sit up to table on a tail.

Little Mermaid. Are you sure he would object to it so very much?

Witch. Most certainly he would. You will find that men are the slaves of fashion, and think far more of what is correct than any of their womenkind can do.

Little Mermaid. Then how can I make myself fashionable to please him?

Witch. Spoken like a true woman! *(Significantly.)* I can give you a powerful potion, my dear, that would change your fishy tail into two little white feet, so like the feet of mortals that they would defy detection.

Little Mermaid (hesitating). Would it—would it hurt me very much?

Witch. Every time you stepped on them, it would feel as if you were treading on sharp knives; but that would be perceptible to no one but yourself. And besides, I should require payment.

Little Mermaid. Payment! but I have nothing of any value with me!

Witch. Oh yes, you have—(*wheeling*)—your dear little pink tongue, your sweet delightful voice. It is just what I have been needing for a long time, mine gets so hoarse with the smoke of all this cooking.

Little Mermaid (frightened). My voice! But this is too cruel! If you took away my voice, how could I ever speak or sing to the Prince?

Witch. Why, my dear, with your wonderful beauty such a girl as you would never need the gift of speech.

Little Mermaid (desperately). Is there no other way?

Witch (solemnly). There is no other way!

Little Mermaid. Then be it so—it is for the Prince.

[*Kneels down and stretches out her tongue, WITCH cuts it off and puts it by carelessly. She brews the potion in a cauldron, singing a French song. When ready, she hands the crystal goblet filled with rose-coloured liquid to the MERMAID.*

Witch. There, take it with you, and don't attempt to drink it until you get on to dry land. And if those Polypi try to bother you, just throw a little of it over them, and they will shrivel up pretty quickly.

[*LITTLE MERMAID curtsies silently and takes the crystal goblet, which she slowly raises in both hands towards heaven.*

WITCH kindles a red light in the cauldron, then stands in a menacing attitude.

Tableau. (A few bars of Gounod's "When all was Young.")

CURTAIN.

INTERLUDE III.—*The Seashore.*

Enter WATER-BABIES and TOM.

Tom. Just listen, you Water-babies! I played such a fine trick this morning. I put a pebble in a sea-anemone's mouth, and he thought it was his dinner and shut up tight all round it. Wasn't it fun?

Babies. Take care what you are at! Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid is coming. Look! here she comes now.

Enter MRS. B. BABIES form into a semicircle, with TOM at the end.

Mrs. B. Good-morning, my little dears. Your faces tell me that you have all been good children since I came last, so open your mouths and shut your eyes, and see what I will give you!

[*Puts a sweet into each one's mouth, till she comes to TOM; pauses, looks at him, puts a pebble into his mouth.*

Tom. Oh, it's a nasty, cold hard pebble, and you're a very cru-cru-cruel woman. [*Blubbers.*

Mrs. B. And you are a very cruel boy, who puts pebbles into the sea-anemones' mouths to make them

fancy they had caught a good dinner. As you do to them, so I must do to you.

Tom. Who told you that?

Mrs. B. Why, you did yourself this very minute.

Tom. Why, I never opened my lips while you were here.

Mrs. B. Yes, everybody tells me by their faces exactly what they have done wrong, so it's no use trying to hide anything from *me*. Now go and be a good boy, and I will put no more pebbles into your mouth, if you put none into other creatures'.

Tom. I did not know there was any harm in it.

Mrs. B. Then you know now. If you don't know that dirt breeds fever, that is no reason why the fever should not kill you. The lobster did not know there was any harm in getting into the lobster pot, but it caught him all the same.

Tom. Well, you *are* a little hard on a poor lad.

Mrs. B. Not at all! I am the best friend you ever had in your life. I cannot help punishing people when they do wrong. For I work by machinery, just like an engine, and am wound up very carefully, so that I cannot help going!

Tom (*pretending to wind her up at back*). Was it long ago they wound you up?

Mrs. B. I was wound up once and for all, so long ago that I forget all about it.

Tom. Dear me, you *must* have been made a long time.

Mrs. B. I never *was* made, my child, and I shall go on for ever and ever, for I am as old as Eternity and yet as young as Time.

Tom. Well, you are not so *very* ugly after all!

Mrs. B. I am the ugliest fairy in the world, and I *shall* be, till people behave as they ought. And then I shall grow as lovely as my sister, Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby, who is the loveliest fairy in the world. Now good-bye, my young friends, I must be going; I have plenty more work to do.

Babies. Where are you going to? And when will you come to us again?

Mrs. B. I am going to get hold of all the foolish mammas who pinch in their children's waists to make them small. And I shall put them into tight corsets and lace them up till they feel sick and queer, and their noses grow red, and their hands and feet swell. Then I am going to get hold of the foolish papas, who think their growing girls can live on pastry cakes for dinner. And I shall feed them on pastry cakes for dinner every day, till they grow anæmic and pale and flabby, and get neuralgia, and injure their constitutions for life. And after that I shall come back to you again. Now good-bye, my little dears, and be good.

Babies. Good-bye, good-bye, come again soon. [Exit MRS. B.]

[BABIES *form a semicircle round TOM and sing.*

SONG.—“*Be Done By as you Did.*”

I.

Tom. I rang the front-door bell at night, and then I ran away;
I woke up all the neighbours with my shouting and my play.
It seemed no harm to make a noise when people couldn't see,
But oh! oh! oh! I did not know her Eye was watching me.

Babies. Oh! oh! oh! he did not know her Eye was watching him!

Chorus. Oh, be done by, be done by as you did.

Now your deeds have come to light, they can no more be hid.

Speak when you're spoken to, do as you are bid,

Tell the truth, stand by the weak, and you will ne'er be chid.

II.

Tom. I got into a garden where some nice ripe apples grew;
I broke the hedge and took the fruit, and stole some flowers too.

It seemed no harm to take the things when people didn't see,

But oh! oh! oh! I did not know her Eye was watching me!

Babies. Oh! oh! oh! he did not know, &c.

Chorus. Oh, be done by, &c.

III.

Tom. I've teased the cats and starved the dogs, and beaten horses too.
I've thrown the ink about the room—a tidy thing to do!

I've taken nests and birds' eggs, and chased squirrels up a tree,

But oh! oh! oh! I did not know her Eye was watching me.

Babies. Oh! oh! oh! he did not know, &c.

Chorus. Oh, be done by, &c.

IV.

Tom. I promised I would do a thing, and then I broke my word.

I said I'd go to such a place, and then I never stirred:

It seemed no harm to tell a lie when people didn't see—

But oh! oh! oh! I did not know her Eye was watching me!

Babies. Oh! oh! oh! he did not know, &c.

Chorus. Oh, be done by, &c.

[BABIES *polka singly round the stage to the tune of the chorus repeated, pointing at TOM, who stands staring stupidly with finger in mouth, and exeunt, last one dragging out TOM.*]

SCENE IV.—*Interior of a Room in the Castle.*

PRINCE *sitting on a couch.* LITTLE MERMAID *at his feet.*

Prince. Only think, it is a month to-day since I first discovered you on the Palace steps, my little founding! You had evidently fallen out of some passing ship and been washed up by the sea. And already I have grown so fond of you, that I have made up my mind to keep you with me always.

[LITTLE MERMAID *looks up at him wistfully.*]

Prince. Yes, I do love you the best, my poor dumb child, for you have the best heart of them all, and are the most devoted to me. Be-

sides, you are so like a beautiful maiden who saved my life once during a shipwreck, and whom I may never see again. She is one of the attendants in a holy temple on the seacoast, at some distance from here. But you remind me strangely of her, and when I am with you, I seem to forget her.

[LITTLE MERMAID *sighs deeply*.

Prince. Why are you so sad today, my little one? You are generally so happy and bright! Listen, I will tell you something that will amuse you. My parents have just invited a neighbouring Princess to come and stay at the castle, because they wish me to marry her. But I am sure I shall do nothing of the kind, and the reason why is a little secret between our two selves, is it not?

[LITTLE MERMAID *smiles, and kisses his hand*.

Prince. Ah, that's right, now you are looking brighter. You must help me not to get terribly bored during the next few days. I shall have to be polite towards this individual, and I'm sure she is a very prim and proper young lady, for they tell me she is just "finished"—whatever that means! I only hope she won't stay here very long, or *I* shall be finished likewise! Oh, here she comes, I suppose.

Enter PRINCESS and ATTENDANT ;
PRINCE rises hastily and bows.

Prince. I have much pleasure, Princess—why, it's *you*!

Princess. Yes, my dear Prince. (*Taking both his hands.*) How glad I am to see you once more!

Prince (bewildered). I had only just been saying that I hoped never—I mean—that I could never hope to meet you again.

Princess (looking down). O Prince, you do not yet understand where the promptings of a woman's heart will lead her.

Prince. Perhaps not—but it is a stroke of rare good luck that has brought you here; and now you can teach me all the things I ought to know. I heard you were dreadfully clever—finished—and all that—so I'm afraid you will find me rather an ignoramus.

Princess (smiling). I have no doubt I shall find you a very apt pupil, Prince!

Prince. We'll hope so, at any rate. (*To LITTLE MERMAID.*) Little one, will you see that the Princess's room is ready for her?

[*Exit LITTLE MERMAID, signing to ATTENDANT to follow her.*

Prince. Now, Princess, may I have the honour of escorting you upstairs?

Princess. One moment, Prince. I should be so interested to know who that pretty child is, who looks so sad.

Prince. Oh, I call her my little foundling. I discovered her about a month ago at the watergate of the Palace, and I took a fancy to her, because she reminded me of you, my deliverer! She is

dumb, poor child, but quite devoted to me.

Princess. Oh, she is dumb. . . . Then of course you can trust her entirely. She has a very sweet face, certainly. I will remember to bring her case before one of our philanthropic societies when I go home.

Prince. You are goodness itself ! How glad I am that my parents thought of inviting you here !

[*Bends to kiss her hand.*]

CURTAIN.

SONG.—“*When all was Young*”
(Gounod’s *Faust*).

INTERLUDE IV.

SONG.—“*The Forsaken Merman.*”

(Words from Matthew Arnold’s poem. Music by B. M. Skeat.)

Chorus of MERMAIDS and WATER-
BABIES.

SCENE V.—*Night.* LITTLE MERMAID kneeling alone and weeping, on a high rock by the seashore. Presently enter sisters below with their hair cut off.

Galatea. Dear Lurline, we know how unhappy you are, and we have come to try and help you.

Thetis. We heard that if the wedding of the Prince and Princess took place to-morrow your heart would break, and you would become a spirit of the upper air.

Coral. Then we went to the old witch of the cave, to ask her if we could help you.

Peri. She made us cut off all our beautiful hair and give it her, and in return she gave us this knife.

Galatea. With this you must stab the Princess to the heart before daybreak.

Thetis. Then the Prince will be free to marry you, and you will live happily with him ever after.

Coral. Have courage, dear Lurline. Before daybreak the Princess must die.

Peri. Before daybreak the Princess must die !

All (singing). Farewell—farewell—farewell. [*Exeunt.*]

MUSIC (Gounod).—“*When all was Young.*”

[*The curtains are drawn back, and discover the PRINCESS sleeping in her palace chamber on a raised couch at back of the stage. The LITTLE MERMAID struggles for a few moments with the temptation to slay her ; then turns away, and with a gesture of despair stabs herself to the heart, falling on the steps which lead up to the couch.*]

CURTAIN.

TABLEAU I.—LITTLE MERMAID lying under the ocean, others around her.

SONG.—“*Under a Spreading Coral.*”

T

TABLEAU II. — *The Apotheosis of Self-sacrifice. Three Air-spirits on a high rock by the sea-shore, bend to uplift the LITTLE MERMAID, robed in pure white and kneeling on a ledge below. The whole seashore is bathed in the soft rose-coloured light of dawn.*

SONG (*by voices unseen*).— "*Light after Darkness.*"

[*Either, but not both, of these tableaux should be given. The latter forms the most fitting conclusion to the story, and interprets its true meaning.*]

THE SIEGE OF CALAIS

(Founded on Froissart's "Chronicles")

By C. M. BARMAN

THE first scene of this play is laid in the English camp outside Calais. The back-cloth, Fig. 1, should be painted to represent the walls of Calais, with a distant view of the sea across the meadows. The wings upon either side can be made

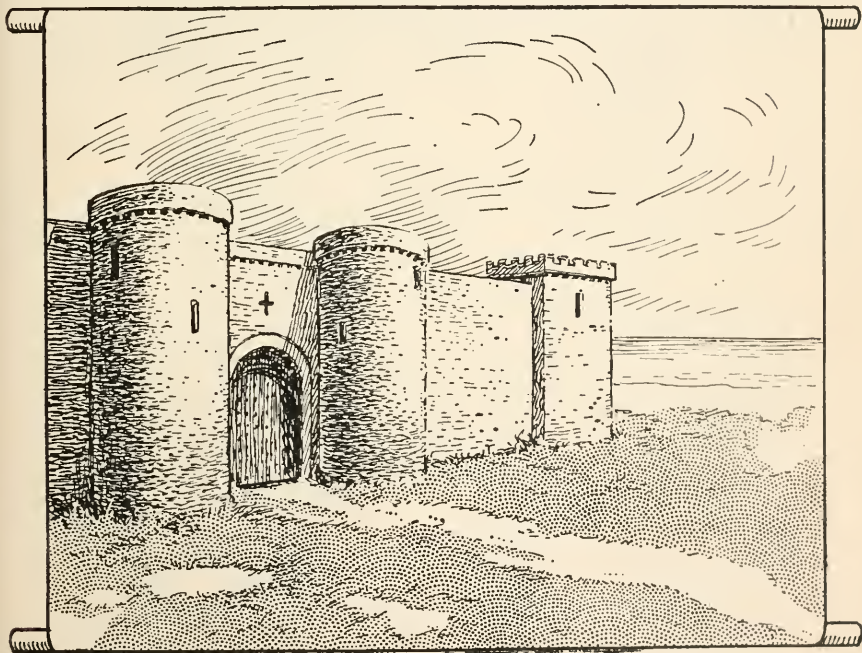


FIG. 1

like tents, the movable flaps of which are arranged after the manner described in "Thickhead."

The room in the Governor's house, Scene III., should be constructed of flats to represent the interior of an old house. In the middle is a large leaded window, through which can be seen a distant view of the sea. Upon the right is an old-fashioned fireplace, above which various weapons hang against the wall. On the left should be a practicable doorway covered with a curtain; whilst the remaining walls are hung with arras on tapestry.

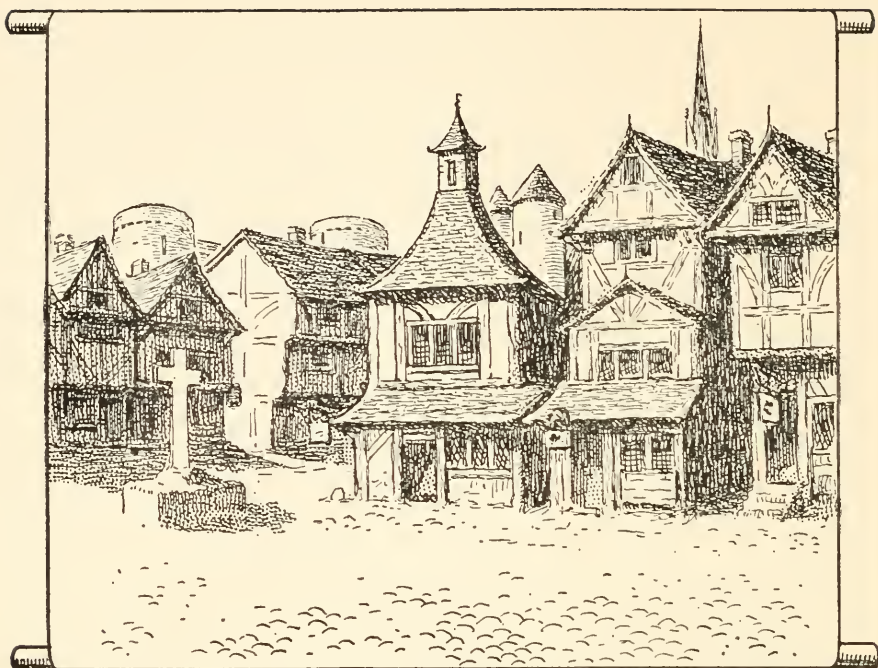


FIG. 2

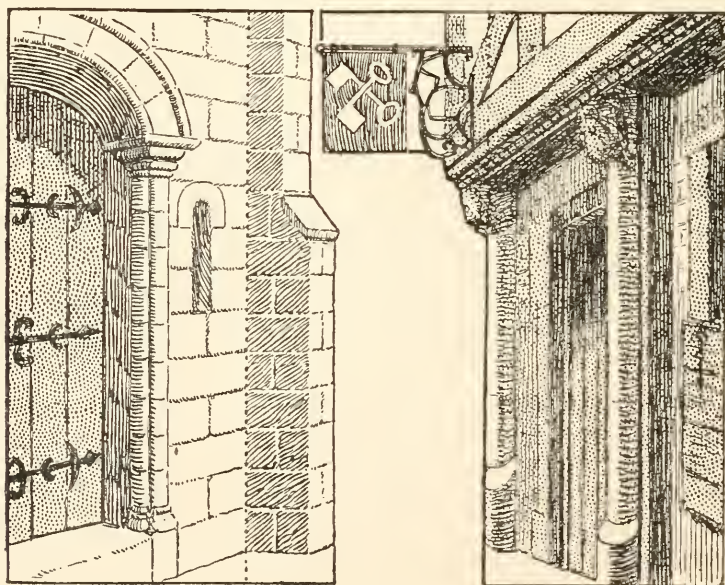


FIG. 3

In Scene IV. the market-place of Calais should be depicted on a back-cloth, the old overhanging houses being huddled together around the market-cross, as illustrated in Fig. 2. The wings, Fig. 3, must be of a similar nature, that on the right having a sign-post, to show that it is an inn; that on the left representing an angle of the church.

As in this short play the number of scenes may involve rather more work than



FIG. 4



FIG. 5

many would care to undertake, scenery may often be adapted from other plays, and supplemented by various makeshifts.

COSTUMES

King Edward III.—The king should wear a black tunic and hood, over the former being a surcoat or tabard emblazoned with the arms of England and France. These tabards reach half-way to the knees, Fig. 4, the rest of the legs being encased in long hose.

Edward, the Black Prince, should be dressed like his father, except that in the emblazonment of his arms there should be only one fleur-de-lis.

All the knights in this play may wear tunics similar to that of the king, but they must not have surcoats. Various shades may be adopted for the dresses of the courtiers, and so long as they harmonise, the costumes can be made of any colour desired.

Queen Philippa should wear a costume similar to that illustrated in Fig. 5, consisting of a long gown richly embroidered beneath a kind of surcoat which is typical of the period. The long veil from the crown of her head reaches to the waist, whilst the gorget or neck-cloth is swathed round the neck and pinned to the hair.

The other ladies should be dressed after a similar fashion, small differences in colour and ornament being introduced to distinguish them from their mistress.

Philip de Vienne.—This little boy may wear a costume almost similar in design to that of his father, with a little sword by his side and a feathered cap upon his head.

THE SIEGE OF CALAIS

CHARACTERS.

KING EDWARD III.

BLACK PRINCE.

SIR GODFREY HARCOURT	} <i>Knights in King Edward's army.</i>
SIR RANALD COBHAM	
SIR WALTER MANNY	
SIR RICHARD STAFFORD	
JOHN COPELAND, <i>a Squire of Northumberland.</i>	

SIR JOHN DE VIENNE, *Governor of Calais.*

PHILIP DE VIENNE, *his little son.*

EUSTACE DE S. PIERRE	} <i>Burgesses of Calais.</i>
JACQUES DE WISSANT	
JOHN D'AIRE	
PETER DE WISSANT	
JEAN DE FIENNES	
ANDRIEU D'ANDRÉ	

QUEEN PHILIPPA.

LADY-IN-WAITING.

THREE OTHER BURGESSES OF CALAIS.

TOWNSPEOPLE, OFFICERS, LADIES ATTENDING ON QUEEN, &c.

SCENE I.—*English Camp outside Calais. September 1346.*

Several knights apparently talking, to whom enter KING EDWARD and BLACK PRINCE.

King. Now that we have our soldiers housed, and due provision

made for the supply of daily wants, we can await with patience the fall of Calais. Doubtless ere many months have passed, those who now so obstinately hold out against our arms will be so pressed by pangs of hunger that they will yield them to our royal will.

Prince. Indeed, your Majesty hath so safeguarded all the approaches to the town that not a loaf of bread, methinks, can be conveyed in thither, unless the ravens bring it on their wings, as they did to the great prophet in the days of dearth.

King. The ravens will not aid our enemies. Heaven is on *our* side.

Enter SIR RANALD COBHAM and SIR RICHARD STAFFORD.

King. What news, Sir Ranald Cobham?

Cobham. May it please your Majesty, even now there issues from the gate of Calais a motley crowd of ill-conditioned creatures, concerning whom Sir Richard Stafford and myself would learn your royal pleasure.

King. Who are these men?

Cobham. 'Tis not men alone, my liege, of whom the crowd is composed. The men are aged or infirm, who cannot aid in the defence of Calais, and with them are women, little children, babies sobbing in their mothers' arms.

King. What do they here outside the gates?

Stafford. They tell us that the Governor of Calais, finding your highness intends not to attack, but to starve out the town, hath driven from its walls the poor and mean who could do nought but add to those who feed upon the scanty provisions stored in the city.

King. An unworthy expedient in so noble a knight! We had not thought it of Sir John de Vienne! But doubtless they are few, these outcasts. Their number?

Cobham. Some seventeen hundred souls, my liege.

King. Seventeen hundred! 'Tis a host! Verily, Sir John shall see them starve before his eyes! They shall not pass my camp, my Wooden Town, as Frenchmen call it! Let them die! (*Stamps his foot and walks about in a rage.*) But stay! Clemency doth become a mighty king; and I *am* mighty, and a *King of England*! Stay, Sir Ranald! Stay, Sir Richard Stafford!—Look that these wretches be well fed. Give them from out our royal store both meat and wine in plenty. Let none go hence unsatisfied; and as they pass from out our camp into the land beyond to seek new homes,

give unto each twopence, and tell them that the King of England gives it them in alms. Go, see that this be done.

[*Exeunt* SIR R. COBHAM and
SIR R. STAFFORD.]

Prince. I would my lady mother could know of this thy gracious deed, my liege. By this time she hath the tidings of our great victory at Crécy. Would we had news of her!

King. I have despatched a messenger who shall presently return and tell how it fares with England and its Queen.

Re-enter SIR R. COBHAM and
SIR R. STAFFORD.

Have you fulfilled our pleasure?

Both. In all things, my liege.

King. Are the poor souls content?

Stafford. More than content, your Majesty. They cease not to express their grateful thanks for your most royal bounty, and with loud and earnest voices pray that Heaven may bless your arms and give you prosperous days.

King. 'Tis well. [*All go out.*]

SCENE II.—*English Camp outside Calais. October 1346.*

Enter from one side SIR GODFREY HARCOURT, *and from the other side* SIR WALTER MANNY.

Harcourt. Welcome, Sir Walter Manny! 'Tis long since we have met! (*They shake hands.*) I fain would hear how thou hast fared in

Gascony, and how thou camest hither.

Manny. The story is a long one and must wait, but this much I will tell now. A knight of Normandy, my prisoner, obtained safe-conduct from his lord for me and twenty of my followers, in lieu of paying ransom. In faith, he was glad to be quit so easily, for I might have demanded ten thousand crowns for his liberty!

Harcourt. And so thou camest without let or hindrance on thy journey.

Manny. Not so, indeed! At Orleans I was seized and sent to Paris, where I nigh lost my head, since King Philip's pleasure was to rid himself of one who had so long been his enemy. But the Duke of Normandy, fearing it would be said he had betrayed me under pretext of safe-conduct, so entreated the king that at the last he was prevailed upon to render me my freedom, and so I came to Calais. But enough of my affairs. What news comes from England?

Harcourt. Good news, indeed! The King of Scots, who with forty thousand men lately invaded Northumberland, hath been defeated at Neville's Cross, some three miles from the town of Newcastle, and, moreover, he himself hath been taken prisoner.

Manny. By my faith, this is joyful tidings! How long ago was this?

Harcourt. Some few days after Michaelmas. The gracious lady

Philippa herself rode up and down the ranks exhorting each man to be of good heart and courage, and to defend the honour of her lord, the King of England.

Manny. The Queen herself! I trow that every man would fight the better for the good words of that fair noble lady! Who were our leaders?

Harcourt. His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, my lord of York, the bishops of Durham and Lincoln, fought in this holy warfare for the safety of our land, besides the lords Mowbray, Percy, Neville, Ros, and Baliol.

Manny. Who took the Scots king prisoner?

Harcourt. A petty Northumberland squire, forsooth, one John Copeland, who had no sooner taken the king captive than he rode off from the field of battle and rested not till he reached his own castle, where he fast imprisoned the unhappy monarch, refusing to surrender him even to the Queen.

Manny. Why acted he so unmannerly?

Harcourt. Faith, I know not. He doth appear before the king to-day to answer for his conduct. 'Tis now the appointed hour, and straightway here comes our sovereign lord.

*Enter the KING, BLACK PRINCE,
SIR R. COBHAM, &c. &c.*

King (seeing SIR W. MANNY). Sir Walter Manny, welcome to our camp! Good news, like ill, doth sometimes travel fast, and we have

heard of thy great deeds in Gascony. We thank thee for thy pains on our behalf, and would that we could give thee fitting guerdon.

Manny (bowing low). The only guerdon that I seek, my liege, is to be at thy side and fight beneath thy banner.

King. That shall be granted thee. Sir Ranald Cobham, bring to our presence the doughty northern squire, late come from England.

SIR R. COBHAM goes and brings in COPELAND, guarded.

Thou worthy squire, that by thy valour hast taken our adversary, the King of Scots, welcome! But answer me, the battle ended, why didst thou not deliver up thy prisoner unto thy royal mistress?

Copeland. I pray your highness, be not miscontent with me that I did not deliver the King of Scots at the commandment of the Queen. Mine oath is to my sovereign lord, I said, and not to any other man or woman living, and I cannot break mine oath. Mine oath is to my lord.

King. Did not thy wits tell thee, good squire, that obedience rendered to the gracious lady who is our deputy would be accounted duty done to ourself?

Copeland. No, my good lord, my wits did not tell me so. Mine oath is to my lord, I said, and not to my lady. If my wits do not accord with the size of my body, I pray your highness will reckon it no fault of mine. Mine oath is to my lord, I said.

King. Truly, good John, thy stature is great, but thy wits methinketh are but small. Know that it is our pleasure that thou return to thy home and deliver thy royal prisoner to the Queen. Thou hast an honest and a loyal heart, and for the service thou hast rendered we make thee our esquire, and do assign five hundred pounds in yearly payment to thee and to thy heirs for ever.

Copeland. I humbly thank my gracious liege. My little wits have won a great reward.

SCENE III.—*Inside Calais. Room in Governor's house. August 3, 1347.*

SIR JOHN DE VIENNE seated at a table; his head resting on his left hand; his right hand hanging listlessly at his side. His little son leaves his toys and approaching the table takes his father's right hand in both his own.

Philip. Father, why dost thou look so sad to-day? My mother tells me that my godfather, King Philip, is at hand. He soon will drive away the cruel Englishmen and bring us food.

Sir John (rising). Go to thy mother, little lad, and tell her that the king comes not to-day—(aside)—nor not at all, I fear.

Philip (wistfully). I wish the king would come to-day. Bertrand and I are so hungry.

Sir John (putting his hand on the child's head). Go thy way, my little son. The burgesses are coming

soon to speak with me. Go thy way.

[*PHILIP kisses his father's hand and goes slowly out. SIR JOHN watches him go, and then paces the room in silence.*]

Three BURGESSES enter and salute the GOVERNOR, who turns to them.

Sir John. What would you?

1st Burgess. Seeing that our sovereign lord hath not been able to force a passage through our enemies' host to our relief, but hath retired from Sangate, we do beseech you, sir, to make what terms you may with the English king, so long as they be honourable and our lives be spared.

Sir John (drawing his sword angrily). Terms with our enemies, against whom we've held this town of Calais well nigh a year! Far be it from me!

2nd Burgess. Bethink you, noble captain, how the aged and the little children faint and die in this famine-stricken town. I met your little Philip even now, sobbing as if his heart would break; and when I asked him why he wept, he said: "The king comes not to-day, and Bertrand still will only have dry bread to eat."

3rd Burgess. Whether we yield or no, Edward of England soon will enter Calais. Dead men serve not to keep an enemy at bay.

Sir John (after a pause). I yield to your request. Edward is noble, and will needs be generous to those who have withstood him honourably. I'll to the walls and hold a parley.

All. Our prayers go with thee, gentle sir.

SCENE IV.—*Inside Calais. Market-place. August 3, 1347.*

TOWNSFOLK assembling. *Tocsin sounding.*

1st Townsman. Why doth the great bell ring out so lustily, summoning us to the market-place? Thinkest thou that deliverance is at hand?

2nd Townsman. Deliverance! Dost thou not know that our brave captain hath been in parley with the English king, offering to surrender Calais on fair and honourable conditions?

1st Townsman. I knew it not. Here comes the Governor, and his face doth wear an even sadder aspect than it is wont to bear.

[*SIR JOHN DE VIENNE enters, followed by officers. The standard is borne by an officer, who stands at SIR JOHN'S side while he addresses the people.*]

Sir John. Comrades in arms, and good people of the town, I come to lay before you the King of England's terms. Knowing him to be a great and generous prince, I trusted that on surrender of the town and castle, and all the goods therein, he, of his gentleness, would grant to us our lives and liberty. (*Pauses.*) I scarce can find the heart to tell you what his answer was. Even the king's own envoys were moved to tears as they delivered their hard master's message.

Their words were these :—"Edward of England, our most noble sovereign lord, hath commanded us to say that if the men of Calais will have their lives and liberty, let six of the chief burgesses come out bareheaded, barefooted, and in their shirts, with halters round their necks, with the keys of the town and castle in their hands, and let these six yield themselves purely to his highness's will, and the residue he will take to his mercy." (*Groans from the people.*) Brave men of Calais, ye have heard the king's reply ; now take counsel and make a swift answer.

Townspeople. Alack ! alack ! No hope is left ! It cannot be that any will fulfil these hard conditions !

[*PEOPLE show signs of grief, wringing their hands, weeping, &c.*

Eustace de S. Pierre. Sirs, great and small, pity it were that such people as be in this town should die by famine or otherwise when there is a means to save them. He that should give himself to save the rest would be, methinketh, pleasing to our Holy Lord ; wherefore, I will be the first to put my life in jeopardy.

People. O noble Eustace ! O great benefactor ! Our little children shall be taught to bless thy name !

John d'Aire. I will keep company with my gossip Eustace.

Jacques de Wissant. If my two cousins go, I follow them.

Peter de Wissant. Brother, we

have always been together. Now we cannot part. I go with thee.

Jean de Fiennes. And I.

Andrieu d'André. And I.

Townsmen. O gracious Sirs, the saviours of the starving multitudes within these walls, the love and thanks of grateful hearts go with you.

SCENE V.—*English Camp outside Calais. August 4, 1347.*

The KING seated on a raised seat within the tent, which is open.

The QUEEN on a lower seat at his side. The BLACK PRINCE, SIR WALTER MANNY, SIR GODFREY HARCOURT, SIR RANALD COBHAM, SIR RICHARD STAFFORD, &c., standing around.

King. What answer makes the Governor of Calais ?

Manny. My sovereign lord, the Governor of Calais hath sent by me six most honourable, rich and notable burgesses, commending them unto your highness's mercy, that they die not.

King. Bring to our presence these obstinate churls.

[*SIR W. MANNY retires, and returns bringing in the six BURGESSES, barefooted, &c., who approach the KING and kneel before him.*

King (with vehemence). Speak ! Who are you ? and what your errand ?

Eustace de S. Pierre. Gentle king, behold us who were great merchants and burgesses of Calais ; we

have brought the keys of the town and castle, and we submit ourselves unto your gracious will and pleasure to save the residue of the people of Calais, who have suffered greatly. Sir, we beseech your grace to have mercy and pity upon us.

King. Mercy and pity ye shall not have from me ! The men of Calais have aroused my ire for all the damage and displeasure they have done to me on the seas these many years ! Sir Ranald Cobham, see that these six be executed within an hour, as thou valu'st thy life !

Cobham. Ah, sire, say not so ! I pray your highness to have mercy on men of so much worth.

King. Away with them, I say !

Black Prince. My honoured lord and father, I beseech you, forbear to take the lives of these brave foes !

King. Words cannot move me. I will have my will !

Manny. Ah, noble king, for God's sake, refrain ! Ye have the name of a noble sovereign, therefore now do not a thing that should blemish your renown. Every man will say it is great cruelty to put to death such honest persons, who by their own wills commit themselves unto your grace to save their fellows.

King. My will is firm as adamant. Sir Ranald, command the headsmen here to execute them in our presence.

Queen (*rising and kneeling before*

the KING). Ah, gentle sir, since I have passed the sea in great peril I have desired nothing of you ; therefore now I humbly beg you, for the honour of our Lord Christ, and for the love of me, that you will have mercy on these six burghesses.

King (*rising and taking the QUEEN by the hand, who rises and stands by his side*). Ah, dame, I would you had been in some other place ; you make such request of me that I cannot deny you. Wherefore I give these men unto you to do your pleasure with them.

Queen (*kissing his hand*). Now speaks my lord according to the dignity of his fair name. The merciful are blessed, saith our Holy Lord ; blessed both by Him and those on whom they have compassion. (*Gently drops the KING's hand and turns to the BURGESSES*.) Follow me, my friends. When ye have been refreshed and newly clad, ye shall be led in safety through our host and set at liberty.

[*The prisoners, who had risen at the beginning of her speech, bow low before the QUEEN.*]

Eustace de S. Pierre. Fair, gracious lady, for thy sweet words on our behalf we render thee our grateful thanks and rest thy bounden servants ever.

[*They follow the QUEEN out as the curtain falls.*]

THE PIED PIPER

(DRAMATISED VERSION)

(*As Played at Peebles, July 6th and 7th, 1910.*)

By GEORGE C. PRINGLE, M.A., F.R.S.E.

THERE is no occasion for any scenery for the introduction of this play. Before the rise of the curtain a woman of Hamelin should step before the footlights and address the audience with the opening words of Browning's poem.

The scenery for Act I. should be made with flats arranged as the interior of the council-chamber. All the walls are wainscoted, and hung in places with portraits of former civic worthies. In the centre of the room and parallel with the footlights is a large table, at the head of which sits the Mayor with the Corporation gathered around him.

The street in Hamelin, in which Act II. takes place, can be constructed with the back-cloth and wings described in connection with Scene IV. of "*The Siege of Calais*."

The rats which follow the piper through the streets can be represented by toy rats which, placed in one wing with long strings passing to the opposite wing, can be pulled along at the proper moment to give the effect of following the Pied Piper when he plays his melody. A number of home-made rats can also be made of grey, brown, or black wool, with long strings for tails and black beads to represent the eyes. If these latter are used they should be pulled across the stage rather smartly to deceive the more critical eyes amongst the audience.

A rapid transformation scene should follow. The stage should be darkened in such a manner that the houses and scenery are barely visible. An imitation rat should then make his appearance, whilst a voice from the back of the stage chants his lament. This has no sooner been accomplished than the lights are turned full on once more and all the characters crowd into the streets, led by the Mayor. In the third scene the back-cloth and wings are arranged as before. For the fourth Act, the curtain is left down, and the poet, with Willie at his knee, repeats his lines.

COSTUMES

The Pied Piper.—This strange being, illustrated in Fig. 1, can wear a long yellow and red cloak reaching from his shoulders to his heels. A pointed cap of the same colours should cover his fair dishevelled hair; the actor's face being made up to look haggard and thin, with a mysterious smile lurking about his lips. In his hand is a long reed pipe attached to a string round his neck.

The Mayor.—A long scarlet gown lined with ermine, with a hood of the same material, should cover the ample dimensions of the Mayor's figure. Beneath this gown, Fig. 2, he should wear a plain tunic and hose, whilst around his neck is his chain of office. A flat hat as illustrated in the diagram, and a make-up with white beard and silver locks will complete the figure.

The Corporation of Hamelin.—The members of this august body will wear similar costumes to that of the Mayor, although their cloaks should not be so



FIG. 1



FIG. 2

richly nor so handsomely made. They will of course require no gilt chains, but should appear as plain honest burghers.

The Citizens.—These should all be dressed in coloured shirts, with brown knee-breeches and worsted stockings, their heads being bare. Each can carry some implement suggestive of a trade—the carpenter with his saw, the cooper with a stave, &c. The First Citizen may be dressed rather better, having a coat and hat suggestive of moderate opulence.

The Women of Hamelin.—Each of these characters must be dressed like a worthy German *Hausfrau*, with a plain brown or black frock hidden beneath an ample white apron, the lower edge of which is embroidered in bright colours. A white collar round the neck and a small white wimple over the head, Fig. 3, will prove an admirable costume.

The Boys and Girls.—The children should be dressed very simply in everyday costumes. In arranging their garments, however, care must be taken to avoid

choosing anything unsuitable for the period. The little lame boy will, of course, need a crutch to assist him in limping about the stage.

The Halberdiers.—These soldiers wear jerkins made of imitation leather, with hose and pointed shoes. A gorget of some darker material must cover their necks and reach down over the shoulders—an idea of the costume can be gained from a study of any illustrated history book. The helmet can be made out of a bowler hat from which the brim has been removed, A, Fig. 4. A piece of cardboard, B, is cut in such a way that it fits over the hat, as seen in E. The



FIG. 3

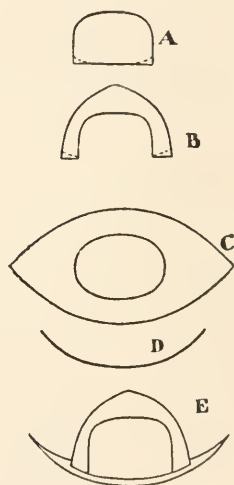


FIG. 4

turn-up brim cut from cardboard to the shape depicted in C is bent to about the curve D, and is then put in position and glued. When covered with silver paper the helmet will be of the exact description of those worn in the Middle Ages.

The Poet.—If desired, this character can be made up to represent Robert Browning. A portrait of that famous writer should be studied, and a black suit, such as was worn in mid-Victorian times, will serve for the costume.

N.B.—Considerable amusement may be got by arranging for the rats, cats, and dogs to be played by small boys dressed in tight-fitting linen jackets suitably coloured. The tails can be made of wire covered with cotton-wool painted to match the coats. Cardboard or canvas heads will complete the make-up. Thus attired the "animals" can indulge in a lot of byplay which will greatly add to the success of the entertainment.

THE PIED PIPER¹

CHARACTERS.

THE PIED PIPER.

MAYOR OF HAMELIN.

CORPORATION OF HAMELIN.

FIRST CITIZEN.

WOMEN OF HAMELIN.

CITIZENS OF HAMELIN.

LAME BOY.

RATS OF HAMELIN.

DOGS.

CATS.

BOYS AND GIRLS OF HAMELIN.

HALBERDIERS.

POET.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Hamelin.*

Women are seen going out and in their houses. Some washing, some cooking, some sweeping, some scrubbing, some gossiping. One sits by a cradle, another at a spinning-wheel. Rats scurry out and in. Dogs and cats lie sleeping near the doors. All the time the music gets louder and faster as the running and scampering of the rats increase, and ends in a crescendo as the women jump to their feet and scream, and the scene ends with a fight between the rats and the cats and the dogs. When the music stops several rats lie dead, and one or two cats. Music.

Hamelin Town's in Brunswick,

By famous Hanover city ;

The River Weser, deep and wide,
Washes its wall on the southern side ;
A pleasanter spot you never spied ;

But, when begins my ditty,
Almost five hundred years ago,
To see the townsfolk suffer so
From vermin, was a pity.

Rats !

They fought the dogs and killed the cats,
And bit the babies in the cradles,
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
And licked the soup from the cooks'
own ladles,

Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
And even spoiled the women's chats
By drowning their speaking
With shrieking and squeaking
In fifty different sharps and flats.

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.—*The Council-chamber of Hamelin. MAYOR and COUNCIL seated. The MAYOR rises. The MEMBERS doff their hats.*

Mayor. I pray you, gentlemen,
give heed,

The Notary our acts will read.

Notary. The Corporation of the Burgh of Hamelin, holden Monday the fourth day of July the year of God 1376, the assize having been called, the council confirmed, each absent councillor was amerced.

¹ The Play takes one hour to act ; but could with advantage be lengthened in two of the scenes—the procession of rats, and that of the children.

Item: That same day were made Aldermen, John Meyer, Charles Anderson, Jacob Kirche, Wilhelm Ratten. Item: That same day was made head rat-catcher to the City Wilhelm Ratten, Alderman, with power to appoint under rat-catchers, not to exceed three in number to each ward of the City, with power of certification to the Treasurer of number of rats at-trapped by each of the aforesaid under rat-catchers, the Treasurer to pay to the said under rat-catchers the sum of one *pfennig per caudam*. [Notary sits down.

Mayor (rising). What saith the Council, does't approve

The records read, and will one move

That we adopt and sign them with our seal?

For business must be done, come woe, come weal,

Though weather's warm and rattens squeal!

[Laughter and applause.

All. Agreed! Agreed! Agreed!

[MAYOR signs the minutes which have been handed to him by the NOTARY.

Mayor. And now our Notary will read us the Agenda.

I trust, I have some sleep, we soon shall make an end—a

Day so hot invites to slumber,

[Music begins.

To thirst as well, and as we number But twelve, our cellar still contains

Of wine enough to freshen our weary brains.

I make, I know, a welcome motion, (I hope you will approve the notion) That we should have just forty winks,

And then a few refreshing drinks.

[MAYOR looks up and finds all the COUNCIL asleep. He seats himself and begins to nod. Music gets louder and louder. Voices and cries of the CITIZENS are heard behind the scenes. Music ends with a crash as the CITIZENS rush into the Council-chamber.

1st Citizen (excitedly addressing the Mayor). 'Tis clear, sir, you're a noddy.

All. Yes, a noddy.

1st Citizen. And as for our Corporation, shocking!

All. Shocking!

1st Citizen. To think we buy gowns lined with ermine

For dolts that can't or won't determine

What's best to rid us of our vermin! You hope, because you're old and obese,

To find in the furry civic robe ease! Rouse up, sirs!

All. Rouse up!

1st Citizen. Give your brains a racking,

Or sure as fate we'll send you packing!

All. We'll send you packing!

[Men-at-arms drive out the CITIZENS.

Mayor (rises). A deputation led by an Abbot of Misrule;

I'd send the lot all back to school.

In sooth, the rats need some removing,
Yet burghers' manners want improving.

[*Laughter and applause.*]

6th Councillor. My lord, the rats remove,
And then their manners will improve;

On council dignity set less store,
On city welfare, vastly more!

2nd Councillor. Mr. Mayor, I propose
To get out the hose!

3rd Councillor. I suggest the horse-brush.

All. Hush! Hush! Hush!

Mayor. Order! Order! Order!

[*Beats the desk with his hammer.*]

I suggest Persian cats.

Gentlemen, our business is rats.

An hour we've sat in council,

For a guilder I'd my ermine gown sell.

1st Councillor. I know a Councillor, who though smaller

I'm sure would give a hundred thaler.

Mayor (*sternly*). A remark most indecorous.

The business that's before us

Is——

All. RATS!!

Mayor. If you won't support the chair

Then I'll stay no longer here,

And the men-at-arms will clear the hall.

Midst turmoil and alarms I respond to duty's call;

But I wish I were a mile hence!

It's easy to bid one rack one's brain—

I'm sure my poor head aches again,

I've scratched it so, and all in vain.
Oh, for a trap, a trap, a trap!

[*A tap at the chamber door.*]

Bless us, what's that?

1st Councillor. Only a scraping of shoes on the mat.

Mayor. Anything like the sound of a rat

Makes my heart go pit-a-pat!

(*Pompously.*) Come in!

PIPER *enters and advances to the council table, and makes a profound bow.*

2nd Councillor. It's as my great-grand sire,

Starting up at the Trump of Doom's tone,

Had walked this way from his painted tombstone!

Piper. Please your honours, I'm able,

By means of a secret charm, to draw
All creatures living beneath the sun,
That creep or swim or fly or run,
After me so as you never saw!

And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm,
The mole and toad and newt and viper,

And people call me the Pied Piper.

Yet, poor piper as I am,

In Tartary I freed the Cham,

Last June, from his huge swarms of gnats;

I eased in Asia the Nizam

Of a monstrous brood of vampyre-bats:

And as for what your brain bewilders,

If I can rid your town of rats

Will you give me a thousand guilders?

Mayor and Council. One? Fifty thousand!

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Music. The PIPER plays on his flute, and the RATS collect around him from all quarters. CITIZENS crowd the wings. The PIPER then crosses the stage, the RATS following, as suggested by the verses which follow. The PIPER may stay behind the scenes while the RATS cross ad lib. to suggest great numbers. Two scenes, one a street scene, the other rural, with a river, may be used to assist this illusion.*

Into the street the Piper stept,
Smiling first a little smile,
As if he knew what magic slept
In his quiet pipe the while;
Then, like a musical adept,
To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,
Like a candle-flame where salt is sprinkled;
And ere three shrill notes the pipe uttered,
You heard as if an army muttered;
And the muttering grew to a grumbling;
And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling;
And out of the houses the rats came tumbling.
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,
Families by tens and dozens,

Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives—
Followed the Piper for their lives.
From street to street he piped advancing,
And step for step they followed dancing,
Until they came to the river Weser.

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.—*Rat-land. The stage should be darkened. Enter RAT which escaped. Seats himself on a log. He holds a sheet or a slate, on which he makes a show of writing. Rest of the RATS sit round him in a semicircle.*

Escaped Rat. The thousand rats of Hamelin
Are drowned in the Weser;
But pushing, swimming, scrambling,
I've escaped like Julius Cæsar,
And lived, like him, to carry
To rat-land home my commentary:
[RATS squeak applause.
At the first shrill notes of the pipe,
I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,
[RATS squeak applause.
And putting apples, wondrous ripe,
[RATS squeak applause.
Into a cider-press's gripe.
And a moving away of pickle-tub boards,
[RATS squeak applause.
And a leaving ajar of conserve-cup-boards,
[RATS squeak applause.
And drawing the corks out of train-oil-flasks,
[Sounds of drawing corks.
And a breaking the hoops of butter-casks:
And it seemed as if a voice,
Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery,

Is breathed, called out, "Oh, rats,
rejoice!

The world is grown to one vast dry-
saltery!

[RATS *squeak applause*.

So munch on, crunch on, take your
nuncheon,

Breakfast, supper, dinner, lun-
cheon!"

And just as a bulky sugar-puncheon,

[RATS *squeak applause*.

All ready staved, like a great sun
shone

Glorious scarce an inch before
me!—

I found the Weser rolling o'er me.

Rats. "Ah! ah!" (*prolonged*).

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.—*The Street*, MAYOR, COR-
PORATION, PIPER, and CITIZENS
crowding the streets, bells ringing,
and PEOPLE *cheering*.

Mayor (in a commanding voice).

Go and get long poles,

Poke out the nests and block up the
holes!

Consult with carpenters and
builders,

And leave in our town not even a
trace

Of the rats!

Piper (suddenly, in a sharp voice).

First, if you please, my thousand
guilders!

[MAYOR and CORPORATION
stare at one another, and the
CITIZENS *exclaim*, "Ah!"

1st Councillor. A thousand guilders!
That's pretty steep.

2nd Councillor. The fellow must
think our purse is deep.

3rd Councillor. And yet our Council
might have met it,

4th Councillor. Had Hamelin's rats
not all been drowned

5th Councillor. In the river Weser's
depths profound.

6th Councillor. For Council dinners
make rare havoc

With Claret, Moselle, Vin-de-Grave,
Hock,

And half the money would replenish
Our cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.

To pay this sum to a wandering
fellow

With a gipsy coat of red and yellow!

Mayor. Besides,

Our business was done at the river's
brink;

We saw with our eyes the vermin
sink,

And what's dead can't come to life,
I think.

So, friend, we're not the folks to
shrink

From the duty of giving you some-
thing for drink,

And a matter of money to put in
your poke;

But as for the guilders, what we
spoke

Of them, as you very well know,
was in joke.

Besides, our losses have made us
thrifty.

A thousand guilders! Come, take
fifty!

Piper (with lowering brows). No
trifling! I can't wait, besides!

I've promised to visit by dinner-time
Bagdat, and accept the prime

Of the Head-Cook's pottage, all he's
rich in,
For having left, in the Caliph's
kitchen,

Of a nest of scorpions no survivor :
With him I proved no bargain-
driver,

With you, don't think I'll bate a
stiver !

And folks who put me in a passion
May find me pipe after another
fashion.

Mayor. How ? d'ye think I brook
Being worse treated than a cook ?
Insulted by a lazy ribald
With idle pipe and vesture piebald ?
You threaten us, fellow ? Do your
worst,
Blow your pipe there till you burst.

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Street Scene.*

The PIPER appears in the street playing his pipe. He stands playing ; the CHILDREN gather around him, singing and clapping their hands. (Dances may be arranged here.) Then the PIPER moves away down the street, followed by the CHILDREN. The same device as in the RAT procession should be resorted to here—the PIPER remaining behind the scenes and the CHILDREN passing him and appearing on the stage, as if they were appearing for the first time. This should be done ad lib. The curtain after a while should be lowered, and the rural

scene with a hill shown when it is raised again. Here repeat as before ad lib. In both scenes the CITIZENS appear crowding in the wings, amazed and spell-bound. Towards the close of the last scene the 1st CITIZEN speaks ; then when the PIPER and CHILDREN disappear, with the LAME BOY left behind, the spell is broken, and they rush across the stage as if in pursuit, weeping and wailing, then curtain. Music.

Once more he stept into the street ;
And to his lips again
Laid his long pipe of smooth straight
cane ;
And ere he blew three notes (such
sweet
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning
Never gave the enraptured air)
There was a rustling that seemed like a
bustling
Of merry crowds justling at pitching and
hustling,
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes
clattering,
Little hands clapping and little tongues
chattering,
And, like fowls in a farmyard when barley
is scattering,
Out came the children running.
All the little boys and girls,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and
laughter.

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council
stood
As if they were changed into blocks of
wood,

Unable to move a step, or cry
 To the children skipping merrily by—
 And could only follow with the eye
 That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.
 But how the Mayor was on the rack,
 And the wretched Council's bosoms
 beat,
 As the Piper turned from the High
 Street
 To where the Weser rolled its waters
 Right in the way of their sons and
 daughters!
 However he turned from south to west,
 And to Koppelberg Hill his steps ad-
 dressed,
 And after him the children pressed;
 Great was the joy in every breast.

1st Citizen. He never can cross
 that mighty top!

2nd Citizen. He's forced to let the
 piping drop.

3rd Citizen. And we shall see our
 children stop!

[As the CHILDREN all dis-
 appear and the LAME BOY
 is left behind, the CITIZENS
 rush across the stage sobbing
 and crying.

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.—*Street deserted.* LAME
 BOY enters.

*Stranger to the City (to LAME BOY
 standing in the corner).* Where are
 your comrades, little lad,
 And whence that look forlorn and
 sad?

Lame Boy. It's dull in our town
 since my playmates left!
 I can't forget that I'm bereft
 Of all the pleasant sights they see,

Which the Piper also promised me.
 For he led us, he said, to a joyous
 land,
 Joining the town and just at hand,
 Where waters gushed and fruit-trees
 grew
 And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
 And everything was strange and
 new;
 The sparrows were brighter than
 peacocks here,
 And their dogs outran our fallow
 deer,
 And honey-bees had lost their
 stings,
 And horses were born with eagles'
 wings:
 And just as I became assured
 My lame foot would be speedily
 cured,
 The music stopped and I stood
 still,
 And found myself outside the hill,
 Left alone against my will,
 To go now limping as before,
 And never hear of that country
 more!

[*Pause. He limps towards a
 house in the street. A door
 opens, and the BOY's mother
 comes and leads him gently
 into the house.*

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

POET seated with WILLY at
 his knee.

Poet. Alas, alas for Hamelin!
 There came into many a burgher's
 pate

A text which says that heaven's gate
 Ope to the rich at as easy rate
 As the needle's eye takes a camel
 in!

The mayor sent East, West, North,
 and South,

To offer the Piper, by word of mouth,
 Wherever it was men's lot to find
 him,

Silver and gold to his heart's content,
 If he'd only return the way he went,
 And bring the children behind
 him.

But when they saw 'twas a lost
 endeavour,

And Piper and dancers were lost
 for ever,

They made a decree that lawyers
 never

Should think their records dated
 duly

If, after the day of the month and
 year,

These words did not as well appear,
 "And so long after what happened
 here

On the Twenty-second of July,
 Thirteen hundred and seventy-six":
 And the better in memory to fix
 The place of the children's last re-
 treat,

They called it, the Pied Piper's
 Street—

Where any one playing on pipe or
 tabor

Was sure for the future to lose his
 labour.

Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern
 To shock with mirth a street
 so solemn;

But opposite the place of the cavern
 They wrote the story on a
 column,

And on the great church-window
 painted

The same, to make the world ac-
 quainted

How their children were stolen
 away,

And there it stands to this very
 day.

And I must not omit to say
 That in Transylvania there's a tribe
 Of alien people that ascribe
 The outlandish ways and dress

On which their neighbours lay such
 stress,

To their fathers and mothers having
 risen

Out of some subterraneous prison
 Into which they were trepanned,
 Long time ago in a mighty band
 Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick
 land,

But how or why, they don't under-
 stand.

So, Willy, let you and me be wipers
 Of scores out with all men—especi-
 ally pipers!

And whether they pipe us free, from
 rats or from mice,

If we've promised them aught, let
 us keep our promise!

CURTAIN.

EPILOGUE.

*A Topical or local Epilogue might
 be given here.*

MELUSINE

By WINIFRED DARCH

THE six scenes of this play all take place in forest land, and the same setting, with a slight alteration for Scene IV., will serve throughout the play. It might be mentioned that Melusine has been acted in different parts of a garden, and if any



FIG. 1



FIG. 2

reader has grounds containing a small thicket it will be found quite simple to produce the play in the open.

For those who decide to act this play upon an ordinary stage, the forest scenery already described in "Health, Wealth, and Happiness" can be used with good effect. In Scene IV. it will be necessary to introduce the cave described in "King Uggermugger," a few wild vine tendrils or briar shoots being trailed over the rocks.

COSTUMES

Raymond, Count of Lusignan.—In the first scene Raymond appears in a hunting costume similar to that shown in Fig. 1. He should have a long tunic of some buff material to represent leather, girded with a short sword or dagger hanging from a leather belt, whilst a strap across his right shoulder supports a hunting-horn. Strong leather top-boots, to which are attached spurs, can be made of cloth in the manner described in "Thickhead," if the actual articles are unobtainable. Raymond can wear a cap similar to that in the illustration, with a feather stuck therein. The second costume for Raymond may be similar to that already described for Prince Kenneth in the "Cherry-blossom Princess."

Gervase.—A little boy should play the part of Count Raymond's son, as he is supposed to be a child of about three years of age. Any plain costume will be suitable for so young an actor, although obvious anachronisms must be carefully avoided.

Melusine.—The first costume for Melusine should be similar to her sister Dryads, consisting of a flimsy white garment wrapped loosely about the figure, leaving the arms and neck bare, the hair loose and flowing down the back, with a garland of oak-leaves.

Her second costume will be that of a grand lady, as illustrated in Fig. 2. The gown, still white, should be embroidered with gold, and very simple in design. The long white veil over her head must be bound with a gold fillet and should reach to about her waist, whilst a white silk gorget or throat-band is swathed around the neck.

Alladine.—As this lady is surnamed "of the Dark Tresses," the person playing her part must have dark hair, or if necessary wear a wig. The costume described for Princess Cherry-blossom, with a tall cap and drooping veil, will serve admirably for this character.

La Dame de Castel-beau, Alladine's mother, should wear a dress similar to the second costume of Melusine, only of a dark colour. Her hair must be powdered to represent grey locks, whilst a certain amount of jewellery can be added to denote her age and station.

Enigma.—A long black flowing cloak should completely enfold the Witch from her shoulders downward, whilst her head, which must be bare, can be wreathed with red poppies.

MELUSINE

CHARACTERS.

RAYMOND, *Count of Lusignan.*

GERVASE, *his son.*

MELUSINE

TORMANTIL } *Dryads.*

AILANTHE }

ALLADINE OF THE DARK TRESSES.

LA DAME DE CASTEL-BEAU.

ENIGMA, *the Witch.*

OTHER DRYADS (*if more parts are needed*).

SCENE I.—*The DRYADS' Wood.*

SCENE II. (*four years have elapsed*).—
The Forest of Lusignan, near the Castle.

SCENE III.—*The DRYADS' Wood.*

SCENE IV.—*Outside the WITCH's Cave.*

SCENE V.—*A Wood near the WITCH's Cave.*

SCENE VI.—*The DRYADS' Wood.*

SCENE I.—*The DRYADS' Wood.*

Enter TORMANTIL.

Tormantil. Red of the Dawn!
Dark of the Moon!

Come with me, play with me,
Sisters soon!

Enter AILANTHE.

Ailanthé. Forth from my tree-
home

Joyous I spring,
Circling the oak-tree,¹
I dance as I sing.

Tormantil. Pace round the oak-
tree,

Sister sweet,
Waiting for Melusine's
White, bare feet.

Ailanthé. But where is she, the
sweetest of us all,
Wood-spirit true, though mortal was
her sire,
Our long-tressed Melusine, Queen
of the Dance,
Why tarries she?

Tormantil. Her ancient oak
is still;
Yet passing it, I heard a low, soft
sigh,
As she had dreamed strange things,
but would not wake.

Lo! I will call on her:
Melusine, Melusine,
Maid of the soft hair,
Queen of the oak-tree,
Wake and arise!
'Tis the hour of enchantment,
The hour of our dancing,
Wake from thine oak-tree,
White Melusine!

Enter MELUSINE. Her eyes are
full of mystery. She does not
see the others.

Melusine (to herself). What is it
hurts me so? I find no rest,
Always I see his face where'er I go.
This leafy bower screens me not,
and if

I gaze within the pool I find it still.
Ah! Woe is me! No longer joy
I find

In each free dance beneath the
branching trees!

The bright-eyed nymphs, my loved
companions erst,
Seem nothing to me; but I pine—
for what?

—The mortal in me pines for mor-
tal love.

Ailanthé. Up! up! sweet Melu-
sine, arise and dance,
Let's join our hands beneath the
spreading oak.

[*They dance — until footsteps
are heard.*]

Tormantil. Break off the dance,
I hear the steps of one
Whose vision would profane our
forest rite.

Fly, sisters sweet, each seek her
guardian tree,
Until all fear be past!

[*AILANTHE and TORMANTIL
escape, but MELUSINE re-
mains, looking before her as
one unseeing.*]

Enter RAYMOND, from hunting.

Raymond. Lost, every man of
them! And not a trace
Of hart or hound to guide me to
the chase,

¹ There was a little fountain where the play
was originally acted.

And far enough am I from Lusignan.
 [Sees MELUSINE.
 Angels and Saints! What vision
 do I see?
 She hardly seems a maid of mortal
 mould.
 Fain would I speak to her, but all
 my tongue
 Grows sudden halting. Lo! she
 sees me not.
 Her eyes are full of dreams, her
 sweet lips seem
 To murmur some old song of
 ancient years.
 Needs must I speak.
 [RAYMOND advances; MELU-
 SINE gazes at him with won-
 der, but not with surprise.
Raymond. Maiden, if mortal man
 May dare approach to one who
 seems more like
 Some heavenly spirit of celestial
 train,
 May these lips pray that thine will
 answer them.
Melusine. So thou art come!
 Long through the dark night
 hours,
 'Mid the thick branches, I have seen
 thy face
 Shine in the stars; and ever through
 the day
 It glimmered to me amid pool and
 stream,
 By deep-set thicket, and in shady
 glen:
 Now thou art here!
 Raymond (kneeling at her feet).
 Lady of Dreamland, Princess en-
 chanted,
 Bride of my visions, voice that has
 echoed

All through my slumbers! Lo!
 now I see thee,
 Tell, I implore thee, how do men
 name thee?
Melusine. I never saw a man but
 once, and him
 "Father" I called; but he—he
 went away.
 Yet thus he named me, "Melusine,"
 and I
 Know of no other name—
 Raymond. O Melusine! Oh, name
 of all enchantment
 Haunting the forest, 'mong its
 wingéd songsters,
 Too sweet for human cage, yet wilt
 thou seek one;
 'Tis thee alone, in all the world, I love!
Melusine. I love the forest, and
 I love the trees,
 The birds and flowers I love, and
 my free life,
 And yet—
 Raymond. But listen, I will
 tell thee all.
 Men call me Raymond; high
 Lusignan's towers
 Are mine, and mine the fairest lands
 in France.
 But sad the castle, wanting thy
 sweet face
 To light its gloom, as queen of
 heart and home.
Melusine. I love the forest, and I
 love the flowers,
 I love my soft-haired friends who
 love me too—
 And yet—
 Raymond. O forest Princess, what
 wouldst say?
 Say but "I love thee"; and the
 world is all

Turned to pure gold, and full of
happy songs.

Melusine. O stranger knight (and
yet no stranger thou),
Prince of my dreams, thy voice
would draw me on
Across the world— Say but that
word again.

Raymond. What word?

Melusine (*whispers*). "I love
thee!"

Raymond. Fairest, I would say it
Till all the forest echoed, and the
trees

Nodded applauding! *Melusine*, I
love thee.

Say thou wilt go with me, Lady
of Lusignan!

Melusine. I come, O *Raymond*,
o'er the world I follow.

But grant me yet one boon before
I go.

Grant me, lord, husband, who shalt
be my all,

One little boon—within each seven
days

That I may seek the forest that I love!

Raymond. There is a woodland
glade by Lusignan,

The fairest ever seen. A little
stream

Flows past, by primrose beds and
cuckoo flowers

Past white anemones, and tender
blooms

Of wood-sorrel and violet. This
shall be

Thine own, sweet *Melusine*, if only
thou

Wilt wed with me.

Melusine. Swear to me, by the
earth beneath our feet

And by the sacred oak, the tree
I love,

This grove shall be mine own, and
never man

Profane it with his foot.

Raymond (*raising his crossed sword-
hilt*). By all I swear! But
chiefly by this hand,

This little hand, so soft and brown
and sweet! [*Kissing it.*

[*MELUSINE turns from him
towards the forest.*

Melusine. Farewell, O Forest!

And farewell, O Trees,

Farewell, O soft-haired friends, but
not for aye.

For surely never Lusignan brought
home

To his high castle half so strange
a bride.

[*She gives her hand to RAY-
MOND, and they go out.*

Enter the DRYADS.

Ailanthé. Woe to the house, oh
woe;

That weds with Dryad's child!

Woe to the wood-maid, drawn

From out her native wild!

Woe to the lofty line

Of stately Lusignan,

When the heir a forest sprite

As his own bride hath won!

Tormantil. Deep in the Forest,

Melusine,

Weep we in sorrow

O'er thy departing.

Half of thee mortal,

A mortal thou weddest;

Half of thee fairy,

Still must thou hover

By thy loved oak-woods!

Alas, but these two loves
Shall bring thee to sorrow !

SCENE II. (*four years have elapsed*).—
*The Forest of Lusignan, near the
Castle.*

Enter RAYMOND, MELUSINE, and
GERVASE. *She is dressed like
a great lady of the Middle Ages.
GERVASE is a tiny boy of two
or three years old. A banquet
has been spread upon the grass.*

Raymond. Here on this spot we
make our noontide feast ;
What sayest thou, my Princess of
the Wood ?
I think this place will well rejoice
our friends.

Melusine (*doubtfully*). Yea —
but——

Raymond. But what, sweet Melu-
sine ?

Melusine. To day I wander lonely
in the glade.

Raymond. I know it, but the glade
is far away,

And 'tis not yet thine hour.—Pray
take the boy—

[*Hands over* GERVASE.

I go to greet our guests.

Melusine (*detaining him*). Who
is't that come ?

Raymond. None but our friend,
the Dame de Castel-beau
And Alladine, whom men call "the
dark-tressed."

Melusine. Ah ! Alladine ?

Raymond. The same ! Thou
lov'st her well.

Melusine. She is very fair ; but
sometimes I have thought——

Raymond. Thought what, sweet
Melusine ?

Melusine (*in a whisper*). She hated
me !

Raymond. Oh no ! she loves thee ;
She has told me so !

Melusine. The other day, the
Dame de Castel-beau
Told me that Alladine the dark had
thought

To wed with thee ; maybe it was
but talk.

Raymond. Aye ! truly was it ! Alla-
dine is ringed

With suitors, and right easily can
make

Her choice ! But cease, for here
our guests approach.

Enter the DAME DE CASTEL-
BEAU and ALLADINE OF
THE DARK TRESSES. *Cere-
monious greetings take place.*

Melusine. Welcome, sweet friends !
I pray you seat yourselves.

Raymond. Welcome, my lady, and
fair cousin, thou

Most lovely Alladine, be welcome
hither.

Dame de Castel-beau. Count Ray-
mond, for your courtesy we
thank you.

Sweet Countess, in your welcome
we are glad,

And glad to see your son so fairly
grown.

Alladine. How dusk the wood is
round ! A fitting place

For sprites and elves and wraiths
of pillared mist !

Fair lady Melusine, love you this land
After your own ?

Melusine. My own! What mean you, pray?

Alladine. Surely, you came here from foreign clime;

Your name and speech proclaim you not of France,

Yet never do you speak of your own land.

Raymond. Ah! Melusine has her own land of dreams:

'Twas there I found her. Queen of dreams is she.

Dame de Castel-beau. The air is sweet within this woody grove, And sweet refection have you given us. *[Clock strikes twelve.*

Lo! noontide ringing from the castle clock.

Melusine (rising, aside to RAYMOND). Raymond, the hour has struck, I must away!

Sweet friends, farewell, when sunset tints the sky

I'll be with you again. My little son,

Be wise and courteous to your father's guests.

[Curtseys to her guests and exit.

Raymond (a little awkwardly). My lady ever walks on Friday thus, Lonely, amid the forest's ancient glades.

Alladine. Lonely! What! does she always walk alone?

Raymond. Always! 'Twas promised on our troth-pledge day, And never has she failed, as struck the hour

Of twelve to wander thus into the wood.

Alladine. And do you never ask her what she does?

Raymond. Why should I? She, as always, is my Queen, And I her humble follower most obedient.

Alladine. But do you think it not a little strange

That she, your wife, should wander far away

Into the lonely forest without word

Of what she does?

Raymond. I never thought it so; but now it seems——

Alladine. A little strange! More than a little strange!

Count Raymond, *what* does she within that glade? *[Silence.*

You do not know? How blind is man who loves!

Raymond. Prythee, sweet Alladine, do not say so.

My mind perplexes now, with thoughts of doubt

Which make me shudder!

Alladine. O man all-credulous, whom two bright eyes

Beguiled!

Pray Heaven there be not worse behind!

Raymond (seizing her wrists). Speak, maiden, speak! What wouldst thou dare to say?

Alladine (alarmed). I! nothing—only that your Melusine

Is fair—and passing secret in her ways!

Raymond (flinging her aside). This is unbearable; I go to prove That all your words are false!

[Rushes out.

Dame de Castel-beau. Ah! Alladine, that bitter tongue of thine

Has brought division on a happy
house. [To GERVASE.

Come in, poor child? I pray the
saints this all

Only a cloud may be, and nothing
more!

[Exit DAME DE CASTEL-BEAU
and GERVASE.

Alladine (alone). What will he
find? Nothing, perhaps. But
yet

It may be something more—what
follows next?

Then at the least, whatever else
may fall,

I venge myself on Raymond for his
scorn!

SCENE III.—*The DRYADS' Wood.*

*The DRYADS dancing with MELUSINE
—once more in Dryad guise—
about the oak.*

*Dryads (dancing and singing.
Air, "Maybells and Flowers"—
Mendelssohn).*

Three wood-sprites beneath the tree
Do dance the happy day.

When Melusine, in robes of green,
Goes passing down the way.

[Repeat the last two lines.

In each seven days one happy day

For the wood-maids three,

When Fairy Melusine can dance
Beneath the greenwood tree.

[Repeat the last two lines.

*Enter RAYMOND. He does not at
first see the DRYADS.*

Raymond. Where is she? Fool
I was to trust her so!

O Melusine, if thou art false, the
world

Is turned to ashes.

[He sees the DRYADS. *They,
seeing him, fly in terror—only
MELUSINE remaining.*

Melusine (in horror). Raymond!
thou here! Oh, false to plighted
faith!

Oh! lost! All lost!

[Flings herself on her face.

Raymond (advancing). O Melusine
—and wherefore art thou here,

Dancing with spirits mortal, scarce
to see

In this strange guise?

Melusine (sobbing). Oh, lost! All
lost!

Raymond (with anxiety). My wife,
my own, thy words and looks
are wild.

Melusine (rising). I have lost all,
husband and child and home,
To live a lonely Dryad of the wood.
Mortal and Dryad am I, this one
day

To Dryad life I gave—the rest was
thine.

Now all is lost! Unless my lips
shall touch

The magic fruit the dark Enigma
guards,

I go for ever!

Raymond. Melusine, oh, speak!
What of this fruit the dark Enigma
guards?

Melusine. Long is the way, and
many a man has tried
To reach the fruit; but all have
fallen, slain—

Slain by Enigma and her dragon
foul.

Raymond. Straight will I seek it.
 What care I for life
 Since thou art gone, O Love, O
 Melusine?
 Far liefer would I fall to save my
 Love
 Than live to loathe and scorn my-
 self for aye.
 Farewell! Farewell! And, if I
 ere return,
 I bring to thee the fruit of magic
 power. [*Advances towards her.*
Melusine. Nay, stand far off; if
 thou but touch my hand,
 The last faint hope remaining will
 have fled.
 But bring the child; his soft lips
 I may kiss,
 Perhaps for the last time.

[*Exit* RAYMOND.]

Enter ALLADINE.

Alladine. So, Melusine, thy hus-
 band and thy love
 Hath brought thee sorrow! Doth
 it vex thy heart
 Never to see him more, nor touch
 thy child?
 Why dost not speak? Why stare
 with those wild eyes?
 Now dost thou feel the pain I
 once did feel.

[*Exit* ALLADINE.]

Enter RAYMOND and GERVASE.

Melusine. My child, my own!
 Ah! little lips so warm,
 A long farewell I take!
 I fain would say
 To thee, my Raymond, shun this
 task of fear,

But well I know thou wouldst not
 heed my words.

[RAYMOND and GERVASE go
 out in silence. MELUSINE
 lies weeping on the ground.]

Enter DRYADS.

Tormantil. Lo! here she lies,
 Wrapped in her sorrow!
 Dark is the day,
 Darker the morrow!

Perils enfold him
 Always around,
 Whilst thou, ill-starred one,
 Weepst on the ground.

Ailanthé. Comfort shall come,
 Though dark the night,
 Faintly still gleameth
 Hope's golden light.

Melusine sleeping
 Here in the wild,
 Melusine weeping,
 Husband and child.

Yet he shall hold her
 Here at the last,
 His arms enfold her
 All perils past.

SCENE IV.—*Outside the WITCH'S
 Cave.*

Enter the ENIGMA *from within.*

Enigma. Golden fruit grows on
 the tree!

Golden apples, fair to see!
 Round about it is there curled
 The greatest wonder of the world!
 Mine ancient serpent watch doth
 keep
 With golden eyes that know not
 sleep!

Hush ! Footsteps now approach my door !

See, a damsel stands before !
Dark her eyes, and dark her hair,
As a statue, stately, fair !

Enter ALLADINE.

Maiden with the mystic eyes,
What wouldst thou of me, the wise ?

Alladine. Dark Enigma, stern and fell,

What I wish I scarce can tell,
But to-day, before the sun
His full golden course hath run,
Raymond, Lord of Lusignan,
Lord of Lusignan so tall,
Seeks to break your magic bars,
And to scale your castle wall ;
Seeks the golden fruits that grow
Where the dragon coileth low ;
Seeks to win them, tide what tide,
To regain his Dryad bride.

Enigma. Maid with the dark eyes,
well hast thou spoken.

Wise are thy words, and passing
their worth,

Oh, the intruder, what wrath shall
be wroken¹

When I have brought him down to
the earth ?

Alladine. Oh, slay him not, with
fear my heart is failing !

Lo ! I have loved him. Give him
unto me,

Lend me thy witchcraft, it may
prove availing,

May make me fairer in his eyes to be.

Enigma. Well hast thou spoken.

Prythee, hide thee, maiden.

Here will I serve him draught of
magic power ;

Hence then transport him, weary,
slumber-laden,
Far, far away unto thy father's
tower.

[*ALLADINE and ENIGMA retire
into the hut.*

Enter RAYMOND.

Raymond. Three days and nights
through darkling forest glades,
Where the tall pine-tops seek the
lonely stars,
Still have I wandered searching for
the place
Where, as they say, the witch Enigma
dwells,
And where her ancient serpent clips
the tree.
Hungered and thirsting, for I've
travelled fast,
Still must I on, nor lose one precious
hour.

Re-enter ENIGMA.

Enigma. Wanderer from a foreign
shore,

Who has stepped my boundaries
o'er,

Weary thou and travel-worn,

Enter in my lowly cot :

Many a voyager forlorn

There his wanderings forgot.

Honey cakes and rosy wine

Shall be spread, most dainty fare,

Sparkling vintage, all divine,

Worth Olympian banquets rare !

I will spread a silken couch,

Cushions for thy weary head—

Do but deign to enter in,

Enter in my lonely shed !

Raymond. Strange woman with
the scarlet crown,

¹ This participle "wroken" is used by Sir Walter Scott in "The Betrothed."

Thy words thrill me—yet must I go.
 I break no bread, nor do I quench
 my thirst,
 Until I find the fruit to save my
 Love.

Enigma. Tarry yet, warrior, sorely
 art thou weary ;
 Drink of my cup, then pass thee on
 thy way.

Long hast thou wandered in the
 forest dreary ;
 Rest but the night, and go when
 dawns the day.

Raymond. Out of my way, false
 witch, for such thou art,
 I trow full well ! Detain me not, I
 say !

Enigma (scornfully). Ah well !
 Pass on ! Pass on now, if thou
 wilt !

But prythee, mark his scales who
 guards the tree ;

My sleepless serpent, wise as him
 of yore,

Who kept the sacred fruit Medea
 stole,

What time she fled from Colchis
 with her Love.

[*Exit ENIGMA into the hut,*
laughing.

Raymond (alone). The air is thick
 with horror where I stand.

How many men have fought and
 fallen here,

Crushed by the merciless and shim-
 mering folds,

Torn by the claws and poisoned by
 the breath !

Yet, Melusine, with thy sweet face
 to guide,

I will strike home, and maybe my
 great love

Shall fight for me, where others
 fought and failed.

[*RAYMOND'S encounter with the
 dragon will probably take
 place off the stage ; various
 weird sounds, however, should
 be heard to mark the stages of
 the fight. At last he staggers
 on, wounded and dejected.*

Raymond. And nothing done, no
 longer could I bear
 His poisoned breath. Oh, craven
 knight forsworn,

Deep in the lonely wood she waits
 for me—

Loving, forgiving, hoping to the end.

*RAYMOND is about to return to the
 fight, when enter the DRYADS.*

Ailanthé. Raymond of Lusignan,
 Melusine's lord,
 Scorn not the aid
 Which the Dryads afford !

Mighty the dragon is !

Lo ! 'tis his hour.

Short would thy shrift be
 Once in his power.

Tormantil. Dryads will sing to him
 Sweet songs of old.

Sing to the dragon
 Scaled in gold ;

Sing while he dreameth
 Clasped round the root,
 When closed his eyes are,
 Snatch thou the fruit.

SONG (*Air—Chorus of "Sing
 me to Sleep"*).

Sleepless serpent, scaled in gold,
 Dragon of the days of old,
 Close thine eyes so weary sore.
 Sleepless serpent, wake no more.

Sleep! full softly hum the bees.
Sleep! the breeze sleeps in the trees.
Sleep! this hot and glaring noon.
Sleep! through hours of leafy June.
Sleepless serpent, scaled in gold,
Dragon of the days of old,
Sleep within this woody brake.
Sleepless one, no more awake.

Tormantil. Gather the fruit, the
dragon sleepeth sound!

[RAYMOND goes to gather the
fruit while the DRYADS go out.

Re-enter RAYMOND.

Raymond. Thou tiny golden globe
within my hand,

Thou art the charm to save my
Melusine.

Now, false Enigma, art thou baffled
quite. [Exit RAYMOND.

Re-enter immediately ENIGMA and
ALLADINE. ALLADINE ad-
vances and looks out of the
wing to the dragon's tree.

Alladine. Lo! the bold stranger
Has stolen the fruit,
Whilst thy false dragon
Slept round the root!

Enigma. Let me but find my
wand. I know a path
Where we can meet him on his
homeward way. [Exeunt.

SCENE V.—*A Wood near the
WITCH'S Cave.*

Enter ENIGMA and ALLADINE.

Enigma. Now we have cut him off!
Needs must he pass
Over this mossy way,
Over the grass.

Fast will I bind him then,
Deep in yon dale!
Long, long shall Melusine
Weep and bewail!
There shalt thou, Alladine,
For ever dwell,
Wrappéd in dreams with him
Low in the dell.

Alladine. Alas! my mind mis-
gives me! Half-formed fears
Perplex my soul! (*To* ENIGMA.) I
pray thee, be content.

I cannot take a thing that's not my
own.

A man's love forced by witchcraft's
subtle art—

Not freely given—

Enigma. Fool! it is too
late.

Already my skilled ear hath heard
the tread

Of Raymond's foot—the sound of
Raymond's voice.

[*They stand, silent.* RAYMOND
is heard singing as he passes.
ENIGMA, clasping her magic
wand, is about to intercept
him.

Alladine. Thou shalt not do it!
Let him seek in peace

His soft-haired Melusine. I will
not hinder.

Enigma. False maiden, dark-
eyed,

False to word and promise—
Foolish one, love-sick,
How wilt thou prevent me?

Alladine (*seizing the wand*). Why,
thus and thus! My arm with
sudden strength

Is nerved. Raymond, speed on to
safety,

For I have foiled the witch Enigma's craft!

[Sound of RAYMOND'S voice dies away in the distance.]

ENIGMA seizes the wand, makes a pass over ALLADINE, who falls to the ground.

Enigma. Yea, Alladine, before one hour has vanished,

Dead shalt thou lie, by Raymond all forgotten.

I will but seek the dark enchanter's cavern,

Thence to return, and on him vengeance wreak.

[Exit ENIGMA.]

Alladine. Alone! alone! And must I die alone—

Alone, forgotten in the silent wood? While Raymond passes heedless on his way,

And witch Enigma, maddening for revenge,

Pursues him, aided by unholy spells.

[Raising her voice.]

Ah! Raymond, Raymond, for one word with thee!

[She has raised herself, but sinks back.]

Enter RAYMOND, looking round.

Raymond. I thought I heard a voice which called my name.

[Sees ALLADINE.]

St. Giles of Lusignan! what sight is this!

Cold on the earth, the dark-tressed Alladine!

Alas! my cousin, what has now befallen?

Alladine. Raymond, delay not—witch Enigma cometh.

Go—take the fruit—and save thy Melusine.

Go—I am dying—go—and—quickly, Raymond.

Raymond (taking her in his arms).

O Alladine, what is it thou hast done?

Alladine. Tried to undo the ill I did—no—more. *[Dies.]*

Raymond *(laying her down—after a moment's silence)*. Short dirge is thine, oh, loyal unto death!

—Enigma comes!

Re-enter ENIGMA; RAYMOND seizes her wand and breaks it into three pieces. ENIGMA vanishes—in smoke, if possible.

Raymond. And now for hope and love, and Melusine!

[Exit RAYMOND.]

SCENE VI.—*The DRYADS' Wood.*

MELUSINE *discovered alone.*

Melusine. Thus pass the days; but Raymond cometh not.

He comes not now—they pass, the bitter days!

My poor heart cries, “Thy lover hath been slain;

He died to save thee. What dost thou with life?”

But I, alas, have lost my mortal parts,

And, if I would, I never now could die.

Raymond, my Raymond. Ah! the lonely years!

The lonely years must pass! And I still live!

[Flings herself on the ground.]

Enter RAYMOND, *weary and exhausted.*

Raymond. Throughout this fearful night I still have struggled
Onward to press, though all my wounds were throbbing,
And all my brain reeked with the noisome odours
That followed in the witch Enigma's train;
And when I strove to think of other things,
Of Melusine, long waiting here alone,
I only saw poor Alladine's dead face.
Poor Alladine, who gave her life for mine!
A deadly weariness now 'whelms my senses—
I—do not think that—I can wander—further.

[MELUSINE *has risen to her feet and seen* RAYMOND, *but not spoken. He now sees her, and takes a step forward.*

Raymond. Melusine! the fruit.

[*He watches her put it to her lips; then falls senseless at her feet.*

Melusine. Dead! Art dead, Raymond? At least I now am mortal.

Ah! Raymond, mine, awake and speak to me!

Waken, O Raymond! for my fingers touch thee!

Waken, O Raymond! for my lips are warm!

Raymond (reviving). Melusine!

Enter the DRYADS with GERVASE.

Tormantil. Time is this for laughter. Time is this for weeping.

Laughter, for our Melusine has found her Love again.

We, we leave her happy, safely in his keeping;

But our own poor hearts now are brimming o'er with pain.

Ailanthé. Lo! thy child we bring thee. Touch him, clasp him, hold him,

Mother, who has mourned him many a weary day;

Let thy soft lips kiss him, let thine arms enfold him,

Spirit of the forest, Mortal made to-day.

Tormantil. Yet, O Melusine, yet one boon we crave thee,

Which shall ease a little our hearts' lonely pain,

When thou shalt remember thy husband back we gave thee,

Sometimes in the forest come and dance again.

Melusine. I come, sweet friends, full oft. But now we turn,

Raymond, our footsteps to the happy west,

Where Lusignan's grey ramparts front the sky,

And thou shalt all thy high adventure tell.

[*Exeunt* MELUSINE, RAYMOND, and GERVASE. *The DRYADS look wistfully after them.*

CURTAIN.

PYGMALION

A DRAMA IN TWO ACTS

By W. D. CRAUFURD

THIS play, which is founded on a beautiful old Greek story, can be staged with very little trouble or expense. Two flats made to represent Ionic columns, similar to that illustrated in Fig. 1, will be required for wings, and the back-cloth can be painted to represent a hall, with columns of the same description on either side. At the far end of the hall, and apparently in the distance, a view of Athens

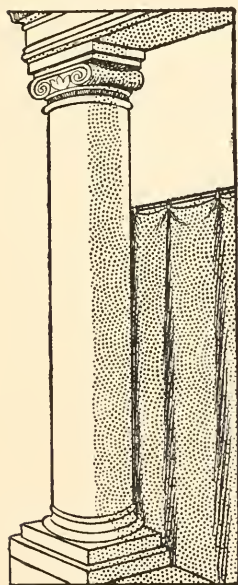


FIG. 1

or the hillside may be shown. If this back-cloth prove too difficult to paint, however, on account of the perspective of columns which will be necessary, a simple white sheet can be hung right across the back of the stage—this simplicity rather adding to, than detracting from, the beauty of the piece.

Between the right wing and the back-cloth a curtain should be placed to conceal the pedestal upon which is the statue of Galatea. This curtain must be kept drawn throughout the play, as by this means the necessity of having a statue to represent Galatea can be obviated.

On the left of the stage should be a statue of Aphrodite covered with garlands. A small altar placed in front of the statue can, in the first scene, have some incense burning slowly upon it. The figure of Aphrodite can be purchased in plaster of Paris from most art-dealers, but almost any Greek statue may be substituted, if desired.

COSTUMES

Pygmalion.—A careful study of Greek costume, as preserved in the statuary and pottery of the period, is necessary, to enable the stage-manager to dress Pygmalion suitably.

Almost any museum or library will furnish numbers of pictures and books from which the information can be gleaned. The simple costume illustrated in Fig. 2 can be easily made, as it consists of nothing but a long tunic ornamented with a Greek pattern at top and bottom, and bound round the waist with a girdle. The arms and legs should be bare, plain sandals being sufficient covering for the feet. This costume is, of course, nothing more than a suggestion, and can be altered or adapted at will.

Hermes.—The most suitable garment in which to drape the Messenger of the Gods would be the “chlamys”—a large cloak buckled over the right shoulder

and reaching to about the knees. Although it was actually the only garment carried, for stage purposes a small white tunic or jersey may be worn beneath it, leaving the arms and legs bare. The winged sandals, for which Hermes was famous, can be made of low shoes, to which large gilded cardboard wings have been fastened upon either side.

Galatea.—The figure illustrated in Fig. 3 will prove an excellent model upon



FIG. 2



FIG. 3

which to base the costume of Galatea. A long white robe, falling in large folds, should reach to the ankles, being girded high up beneath the bust, whilst a light shawl can be draped round the body and carried over one arm, falling therefrom in long folds. The hair, dressed very simply, must be bound up with a white ribbon, after the manner shown in the figure.

Every effort should be made to insure this play being performed in a perfectly simple and unaffected manner. The pathos of the story depends very much upon the absence of any markedly "theatrical" effects.

PYGMALION

CHARACTERS.

PYGMALION.

HERMES.

GALATEA.

CHORUS OF ATHENIANS.

SCENE.—PYGMALION'S *House, Athens.*

Pillars opening at back disclosing view of Athens, and sea in distance. Couch. Statue, R., with curtain round it; L., statue of APHRODITE covered with garlands. Incense burning upon the altar.

ACT I.

Pygmalion (discovered alone). Alone, all alone, yet not alone, whilst I have Art, glorious Art, to inspire and teach me, my constant guide and companion. Often as I sit beside the figures that I mould, I think of the one thing they lack, that I as mortal have no power to give them—Life. If I could, then would Art be perfection here on earth—but, alas, that power is not mine! Why, O ye Gods, do ye inspire me with the power to make these semblances of life, so divine in form, but stop me short just as the climax of my joy could be realised? Is it because I might be arrogant and proud, and vaunt myself as vastly superior to you, in that my figures never fail in loveliness of symmetry?—No, no, it cannot be! (*Walking to the curtain, which he draws aside.*) There she stands in all her beauty—(*pause*)—

finished—(*pause*)—all but in life. Ye Gods, give me but power to add this one last touch to this my perfect task! Aphrodite, fairest of goddesses, hear my prayer! Send life unto this senseless stone, and I will be thy slave through life. (*He sprinkles incense on the altar, when distant music is heard, which gradually dies away.*) Is that thy answer, fair Goddess? Is that thy mocking laughter that I hear? Laugh on; I will laugh too. (*In a passion he draws the curtains together.*) Life is made for pleasure, not for pain! I will go forth and talk and laugh with my companions—Galatea is stone. (*Laughs.*) Life for me—life, real life for me!

[PYGMALION *rushes out through the pillars at back.*

Hermes (enters, looking about). No one here—Pygmalion has just run out, because I suppose the Gods will not accede to his request to turn these blocks of stone to life. The Gods would have a busy time had they to listen to all the numerous prayers from impatient mortals. Life seems to me not altogether such an enviable thing. As stone, to my mind, she is far happier. Mortals worry themselves over trifles, but as stone she has no feelings, no nerves. What dreadful things those are, that mortals call nerves! However, the fair Aphrodite cannot bear to see him suffer

so, and has ordered me, as messenger to all the Gods, to come and touch her eyelids with the fire divine, so that when next he calls upon her she may answer him and be alive.

[Goes to the curtains, draws them aside slowly, climbs up to the statue, and from his wallet which he carries anoints her eyes. He draws the curtains hurriedly again as he hears PYGMALION'S steps, and hides behind the plants.]

Pygmalion (enters hurriedly). I cannot rest away, nothing gives me pleasure now. I am filled with one thought alone, morning, noon, and night. My one cry is, "Oh, that my Galatea had but life!" *(Turning to the curtain and drawing it so that he sees the statue, but the audience cannot.*

Draws it quickly again back.) Ah, my Galatea, would that thou hadst life! Aphrodite, Great Goddess, I call to thee again and yet again to help me. Give her life! *(He sinks on a couch in disgust; he hears from behind the curtain, "Where am I?" He listens, the remark is repeated; he rushes to the curtains and dragging them aside, discovers GALATEA alive.)* There is colour in her cheeks, and her hair is no longer white. Ye Gods, can I be mistaken? Surely there—yes, there is colour in her cheeks; or is it only the conjuring of my fevered brain?

Galatea. Pygmalion.

Pygmalion. She speaks! My life-long wish is realised.

[He bends on his knee as GALATEA slowly descends from the pedestal.]

Galatea. How strange all seems! *(Looking round.)* And dost thou call this life?

Pygmalion. Yes, Galatea, but an hour since thou wast but senseless stone.

Galatea. Thou madest me then, Pygmalion; and dost thou make other beings like me?

Pygmalion. I took of the marble of Pentelicus and formed a statue as beautiful as man has ever made; but life I could not give it. I prayed to Aphrodite, and she has given thee life, my Galatea.

Galatea. Yes, I am thine, for didst thou not give me life? *(Pause.)* So this is life, which all mortals so love, and feel so sad at losing! *(Pause.)* Am I like thee to look upon?

Pygmalion. See here—now canst thou see thy lovely face reflected.

[He hands her a tin.]

Galatea. How very beautiful I am! Are all as beautiful as I am?

Pygmalion. Galatea, thou must not speak so. Many women think as thou dost, but their better feelings prevent them from saying what they think.

Galatea. If I am so beautiful, why should I not say so? I did not make myself. Thou madest me. Praise is due to thee, therefore, when I say, "How beautiful I am!" I merely praise thee for thy cleverness, and surely that is not wrong?

Pygmalion. Galatea, I love thee. I feel that I must love thee, for every curve and every line in that sweet figure has cost me years of

thought and endless pain and trouble. Often and often have I lain and tossed upon my bed at nights when I planned out in my mind the pose thy form should take, or the turn of that beautiful neck, or the hang of that flowing drapery.

Galatea. Ah, master-artist, who is praising me now! Thou toldest me it was wrong to praise myself, and I was only praising thy work, whereas thou art praising what thou madest thyself. (*Walking to the back of the stage and looking down from the terrace.*) How beautiful it is!

Pygmalion. That is Athens, my home and thine. Is it not beautiful?

Galatea. What is that bright colour that I see in yonder distance?

Pygmalion. That is the glorious sea, whose ceaseless waves beat and beat upon our rocky coasts, sometimes in plaintive tones, sometimes with tragic notes, that tell the ruin they have worked upon our weak and helpless race.

Galatea. Do others like thee and me live there? [*Pointing below.*]

Pygmalion. Others live there, Galatea, but not like thee. There stand the temples and the palaces, and there Aphrodite dwells, and there Athenoë. There close to us is Artemis' temple. Thanks, and again thanks, ye Gods, that I am an Athenian born!

Galatea. Am I an Athenian?

Pygmalion. Certainly, for from her quarries wast thou formed.

Galatea. So that is Athens, is it? Often when I was cold stone a

breath of something passed over me (maybe when thou didst pray most for life for me), and I seemed to hear the word "Athens" said, and then all passed and I was as before.

Pygmalion. Every day, every hour, since thou hast been completed, have I prayed to Aphrodite to give thee life, that Athens might see what her son can do.

Galatea. Now seest thou why Aphrodite never listened to thy prayer before, since pride it was that prompted thee. It was not that Galatea might enjoy what there is to enjoy in life and its surroundings, but that Pygmalion might be honoured by all men for his beautiful work, made and endued with life by him. The Gods never answer such prayers; but when in time real love for me entered thy heart, then Aphrodite listened and sent me life to satisfy thy love and deep devotion.

Pygmalion. My Galatea speaks as a goddess, and I rest content to be with her, away from all the world—just we two; for thou art mine, and I am thine alone.

Galatea. I would go forth, Pygmalion, to see this beauteous city thou speakest to me about, with all its numerous palaces and temples.

Pygmalion. I will tell thee, as we go, about all the strange things that we pass.

Galatea. Are all within these palaces and temples like me bounden to thee for life?

Pygmalion. No, no, my Galatea,

thou art the only work that I have as yet endowed with life. These are my friends, but none hold me enthralled as thou dost.

[They wander to back of the terrace again.]

Hermes (enters, close to footlights—aside). Beware, Pygmalion, pride may cause thy fall, as it has done hundreds in their time. *(Pause.)* Remember it was Aphrodite gave thy Galatea life. *[Exit.]*

Galatea (walking to the altar). What is this?

Pygmalion. An altar to the Goddess of Love. The Goddess who gave thee to me.

Galatea. Yet I see a neglected look about it—the incense is out, the flowers are withered. Surely thou oughtest never to forget the goodness shown to thee by the fair Goddess who gave me to thee.

Pygmalion. Yes, yes, another time—now we have much to talk about, and I have many things to tell thee. Come, Galatea, come.

Hermes (aside). Beware, beware, Pygmalion. 'Tis no light matter to offend the Gods.

Pygmalion. Come, Galatea. Forth we will go. Life lies before us. Life—true life; for thou lovest me and I love thee, and there is no truer happiness than that of two pure souls wrapt one in the other. Come, my Galatea, let us on our way.

Galatea. Wilt thou always love me, Pygmalion? Wilt thou always feel as now towards me?

Pygmalion. Always! If ever I say or feel a cross or angry word

towards thee, may'st thou return in that same moment to the senseless stone whence I fashioned thee.

Galatea. Pray the Gods that that may never be.

[They walk slowly to the back.]

Music is heard as of a procession passing below.

Chorus.

Hail, thrice hail to the Goddess fair!
Whose brightness drives from us all care.
Come twine the flowers in offerings gay,
To Eos, Goddess of the Rising Day.

1st Voice (unseen). But see, who is that that stands beside him?

2nd Voice (unseen). Why, 'tis his statue come to life. 'Tis Galatea.

Pygmalion. Yes, my friends, 'tis Galatea. The artist's greatest work is now complete, for see, she breathes—she lives.

Chorus (unseen).

Hail to the greatest artist!
Hail to his greatest work!
Hail, hail to Galatea!

[Flowers of all kinds are thrown up as GALATEA, with PYGMALION'S arm around her, stands with the sun streaming on her face.]

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

Scene, the same as in Act I. The altar of APHRODITE very much neglected.

Galatea (discovered alone). So this is the world! What a strange place!

I think I like it not, and yet I would not return to the cold stone from whence my master fashioned me. (*Pause.*) Only a little past I stood upon that pedestal, a lifeless thing, when suddenly something seemed to course through my veins and I felt my eyes were closed. I opened them, and upon my sight—the most blessed gift of all that the Gods give us—there fell a strange, strange scene. So this is life! Methinks, even as short a time as I have been in this busy, bustling world, I like it not.

Pygmalion (enters). What thinks my Galatea of this world of ours?

Galatea. So this is the world—these stone buildings, those trees and flowers, and that glorious expanse of blue thou call'st the sea.

Pygmalion. To an Athenian, yes! Dost thou like it, Galatea?

Galatea. I do not understand it!—When walking through the busy streets the other creatures kept staring at me so, and as I passed I thought I heard them whisper, "'Tis Galatea, Pygmalion's Galatea!" What meant they?

Pygmalion. I made thee, as I told thee, from the senseless stone, and called thee Galatea. Thou hast brought me fame and glory, for my master Praxiteles looked upon thee as my greatest work.

Galatea. Thou, then, hast a master too, like me, to whom thou art beholden! He made thee well, for thou art beautiful, Pygmalion. To

me thou seemest far, far more beautiful than all those others that I saw; but thy master, perhaps, was an accomplished sculptor, and some of those I saw were the works of a beginner.

Pygmalion. No, no, Galatea, he did not make me, but he taught me to make forms from stone like thee. He taught me how to use the instruments he put within my hands; but it was the Gods who added what I, alas, could never give—Life.

Galatea. I like to be with thee, Pygmalion. When thou art here I am happy; but when thou leavest me, it seems as if a mighty veil were thrown over me, and I can neither feel nor see anything. Thou seemest as if thou heldest something in me, that in thy absence thou didst take with thee.

Pygmalion. I am a man, indeed, whom all the world may envy, Galatea, for having near him one so beautiful as thou.

Galatea. Am I a man also?

Pygmalion. No, Galatea. Thou art what we call a woman—a creature made for man to love, respect, and honour.

Galatea. Lovest thou me, Pygmalion?

Pygmalion. I love thee, Galatea, as man ne'er loved before; for there is in thee what there is in none other—perfect simplicity, perfect purity.

Galatea. I liked not the other creatures that I met in those long labyrinths called streets. I saw

sights that made me shudder. I think all are not like thee, Pygmalion. Some seem to look with complaisance on sights that sent a thrill of pain through me.

Pygmalion. What couldst thou have seen in that short wander through the streets that filled thy pure soul with horror?

Galatea. I saw a poor thing they told me was an animal, dragging a great weight and suffering, oh, so much, as it toiled and toiled along, and no one seemed to help it, but let it suffer, even added to its pain by hitting it. I felt the tears swell up within my eyes, and turned my face away.

Pygmalion. Such sights must not affect thee so. The Gods gave us these creatures we call animals to toil for us.

Galatea. But not to suffer—surely not to suffer. What is that music that breaks upon mine ear?

[Walking to the back.]

Pygmalion. It is a procession on their way to offer flowers at the shrine of Artemis, Goddess of the Twilight. Each evening they pass beneath this terrace, when the sun has run his course, to her temple yonder.

Galatea. Is it not always, then, Pygmalion, as now? Is there a time when that glorious light that shines in yonder vast expanse leaves us awhile?

Pygmalion. Yes, Galatea, but not for long. See now he leaves us, but his chariot returns after a short traverse with redoubled energy and glory.

Galatea (the procession is coming nearer). See, the procession now advances; and who are those, clad in skins, with leaves around their heads?

Pygmalion. Those are the priestesses of Bacchus.

Galatea. Who is Bacchus that he should have such strange attendants?

Pygmalion. The God of Wine. The sweet juice that is extracted from the grapes you see on yonder vine.

Galatea. But why do these men go rolling from side to side? Why walk they not as you and I do?

Pygmalion. Ah, my Galatea, they have drunk too deeply of this luscious juice and their brains are dazed. They know not what they do!

Galatea. And is that what this luscious juice is meant for? To take away all that is highest and divinest in these creatures here! Surely this cannot be right. Why should they wish to make themselves as I was, e'er thou gavest me that final touch which endued me with life? Tell me, Pygmalion, for this is a thing I cannot understand.

Pygmalion. It has puzzled others, Galatea, more learned than thou; and years hence, when thou and I are merely names, and Athens is but Athens, not the capital of the world, this same grape juice, I prophesy, will do more harm each age; but, thank the Gods, that day nor thou

nor I will ever see.—But lo ! Now have they reached the temple.

[*Music becomes quite loud as the unseen chorus sings the hymn to ARTEMIS. PYGMALION and GALATEA sit on the edge of the balcony looking towards the temple of ARTEMIS. The stage gradually, through-out the chorus, becomes darker.*

Chorus.

Queen and Huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep,
Seated in thy silver chair,
State in wonted manner keep.
Hesperus entreats thy Light,
Goddess excellently bright.

Earth let not thy envious shade
Dare itself to interpose,
Cynthia shining orb was made
Heaven to clear when day did close.
Bless us, then, with wished sight,
Goddess excellently bright.

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,
And thy crystal shining quiver.
Give unto the flying hart
Space to breathe, how short soever.
Thou that makest a day of night,
Goddess excellently bright.

BEN JONSON.

[*Music gradually ceases.*

GALATEA, who has been sitting with her head resting on PYGMALION'S shoulder, raises herself a little and comes forward.

Galatea. I am weary and would rest awhile. I feel a kind of dreamy feeling coming over me.

Pygmalion. The feeling that is coming over thee is sleep, my

Galatea, sweet sleep. Come, lie thee down upon this couch, and whilst thou sleepest I will to the city wend my way. The evening closes. Clymenta the slave will see that no one enters, and will watch over my *Galatea* as she sleeps.

Galatea. What is this sleep thou speakest of ? I do not understand.

Pygmalion. It is a cessation of all sense. The brain rests, and thou becomest as still as death, which is as 'twere her sister.

Galatea. Shall I become, then, as stone again, *Pygmalion* ? (*Rising.*) I do not think I wish to be so. Cannot I remain as I am, *Pygmalion* ?

Pygmalion. Fear not. It is a process which takes place every night with all of us, by which weary nature recoups herself. Have no fear, *Galatea*, life will come again. Thou wilt not realise that thou sleepest.

Galatea. I think it is so strange, *Pygmalion* ; I would it were not so. (*She sinks on couch ; rising suddenly once more.*) O *Pygmalion*, I am afraid ; it frightens me. Why cannot I see thee as I saw thee just now ; it seems as if a veil were drawn between us. I cannot see thee. Tell me what this means—tell me, *Pygmalion* !

[*Taking her gently in his arms,*

PYGMALION makes her rest.

Pygmalion. There is no need to fear ; it is night coming on. The sun is sinking to his rest, and so ought my *Galatea* also ; when thou awakest, perhaps the sun will have arisen again.

Galatea. Does all that beauteous

light that I saw e'er now, go out, and are we left in darkness for a time? How terrible it seems! Must it be so?

Pygmalion. Rest, rest, Galatea, and may the Gods watch over thee. (*Looking at the statue of APHRODITE.*) Aphrodite, in my happiness I had forgotten thee, thy flowers are dead, thy lamp extinguished. I will restore them when I return; but my whole heart, my every thought and wish, is now my Galatea's, and Galatea's only.

[*He kisses her gently on the forehead and retires slowly, looking back as he goes. Exit.*]

An intermezzo is played, if possible on strings, as the stage gradually becomes quite dark, but the moon shines full on GALATEA as she sleeps. As the strains of the intermezzo die away HERMES enters.

Hermes. There she lies—but where is Pygmalion? How beautiful she looks! It seems that Aphrodite is jealous of her beauty, and has sent me to change her back to senseless stone. Throughout the whole day Pygmalion has not been once to Aphrodite's temple to offer a thanksgiving for Galatea's change to life. Her altar even here is deserted. Her pride is outraged, and the mighty Goddess will have her revenge. I will wake her and tell her of the Goddess's words. Shall I? I think I will. [*Advances.*]

Galatea (awaking). Back so soon, my Pygmalion? I seem to have but

just lain down upon this couch. (*Looking closely.*) 'Tis not Pygmalion—(*rising quickly*)—and yet this is his house. I am Galatea—ah, what has happened? Why art thou here?

[*HERMES touches a lamp that is on the table, and it immediately lights, and the stage becomes much lighter.*]

Hermes. Fear nothing, Galatea. I am Hermes, the Messenger of the Gods. I come to tell thee of thy fate. Doubtless thou recallest that but this morning Aphrodite gavethee life; yet Pygmalion has neglected to give thanks to the Goddess for her mercy to him, and she feels outraged by his neglect, and has sent me to change thee back again to stone.

Galatea. No, no, I cannot! I pray thee do not execute this cruel order. Pygmalion shall cover over all her temple with roses. She shall have all the treasures and wealth that he has, but spare me to him. O Aphrodite, thou hast a woman's heart! (*Falling before the statue of APHRODITE.*) Hear a woman's prayer, and have mercy upon me! Spare me—spare me!!!

Hermes. Too late! too late! He should have thought of the Great Goddess before. Listen—(*a distant peal of thunder, a flash of lightning*)—the Goddess is enraged, and wills that her sacrifice be soon accomplished.

[*HERMES advances to the pedestal and draws the curtains aside.*]

Galatea (kneeling again at the

statue). O Aphrodite, Goddess, Mother, have pity! Let me but see him once again—speak to him—tell him of my fate—and then do with me as thou wilt—I am content. O Aphrodite, Aphrodite, I call to thee! Hear me—Mother—hear me!

[Falls prostrate before the statue of APHRODITE.]

Hermes. She is inexorable. When once the Goddess is offended nothing can revoke or alter her decree.

[He tries to drag her off at the back up the steps.]

Galatea. Have pity—have pity! *(She feels obliged to go.)* Great Goddess, have pity!

[Her voice is heard farther and farther off. The lights go out and distant music is heard, interspersed with thunder and lightning. A tremendous crash, at which PYGMALION enters.]

Pygmalion (with a lamp in his hand). How fearful is this thunder in the air! The Gods must be enraged. Where is Galatea? Galatea! Galatea!

[A voice a long way off, "PYGMALION! PYGMALION!" Seeing the curtains drawn he rushes to them, pulls them aside, and sees the statue as at the commencement of the Act.]

Pygmalion. Galatea! Galatea! my Galatea!

[Throws himself on the steps.]

Hermes (with full light on him, on the terrace). The Goddess is avenged. It is Aphrodite who has worked this vengeance; for since the advent of Galatea, her temples are deserted,

her private altar undecorated. No wreaths are laid there now. Pygmalion loves his Galatea better than her who gave her life. Now dost thou see the enraged Goddess's revenge.

[Crash of thunder as HERMES disappears.]

Pygmalion (rising). This, then, is her revenge. So ends all happiness here below. In this world duty rules in her stern sway. Love must be there, but not supreme. We must remember that there is a power which must be satisfied before our little wills may have their day. *(Going to the altar and bending before it.)* Aphrodite, I ask thy pardon. Thou art—I had forgot it—supreme. I bow before thee. Thy revenge is indeed complete, for instead of one stone figure see thou now hast two.

[He clasps the statue as the curtain falls. Curtain rises in a few moments. It is bright morning. The stage is empty, save the statue of GALATEA, which stands on her pedestal in marble, and now PYGMALION, clinging to her, is also stone. HERMES appears at back gazing at the scene, just on his way to leave.]

SOLEMN SONG *(sung by Chorus, unseen)*.

Live, live thou dost and shalt; and why?
Souls do not with their bodies die;
And times to come shall, weeping, read
thy glory,
Less in these marble stones than in thy
story.

CURTAIN.

AUNT GRUNDY

A MORAL PLAY

By OLIVE ALLEN

THE box-scene used for "Peter Grief" can, with few alterations, be made to represent the interior of Mrs. Grundy's parlour. The walls are covered with white paper ornamented with some tasty design, and should be hung with pictures and silhouettes. The large double flat at the back can contain a leaded casement



FIG. 1



FIG. 2

window bordered with chintz curtains pulled to one side; through the opening being seen a distant view of the village green, with cottages and the church spire. This can be painted on a small flat or blind, placed about two feet from the back of the cloth. In the right wing must be a practicable door; in the left an open fireplace, with mantel-shelf supporting some old-fashioned china.

COSTUMES

Mrs. Grundy.—This stately old lady will wear a plain bodice and crinoline skirt with large flounces, Fig. 1, a deep fringed shawl being wrapped round her shoulders; whilst a poke-bonnet, adorned with a large feather, covers her grey head, made

up somewhat after the fashion shown in the diagram. The addition of a bulky gingham umbrella will complete Mrs. Grundy's dress.

Miss Georgina.—A suitable costume for this prim young lady is shown in Fig. 2. It consists of a short flounced skirt, beneath which a few inches of frilled "pantalettes" are visible, and a short sleeveless bodice, with a low neck, tucked into a large sash. Upon her head, during part of the play, is a large bonnet ornamented with flowers, and with ribbons hanging down over her shoulders.

Master Charles, her brother, is dressed something like the little boy in "Peter Grief," with a short coat and leather belt, broad check trousers reaching to half-



FIG. 3



FIG. 4

way between his knees and ankles, white socks, low shoes, a big white collar, and a large peaked cap encircled with a check ribbon. Both he and his sister possess handkerchiefs of a startling pattern.

Seraphina.—Mrs. Grundy's niece, Fig. 3, has a dark shawl over her plain white bodice, the low neck of which is adorned with a big brooch. Her check crinoline skirt is worked with a braid pattern, but is otherwise perfectly plain. A little bonnet should be made similar to the pattern in the figure, whilst her hair must be parted in the middle and waved each side.

Miss Fanny Frivol.—This very delightful young lady is attired in the height of fashion, having a white frock with big flounces at the bottom of the skirt. A fine lace collar, fastened with a brooch, reaches almost to her shoulders, being partly hidden, however, by an elegant shawl, made of some fine material. A large poke-bonnet partially conceals her curling locks, a stray wisp or two of which, however, should cluster round her neck.

Master Archibald McAlister.—A suitable dress for the young beau is illustrated in Fig. 4. He has a swallow-tail coat, an elegant fancy waistcoat, large bow, and neat white trousers, strapped tightly beneath the instep. Upon his head is a white beaver hat encircled with a large black band. Master Archibald should carry a fashionable cane with tassels, and appear in every respect a most elegant young man.

AUNT GRUNDY

CHARACTERS.

MRS. GRUNDY.

MISS GEORGINA MARY GRUNDY,

MASTER CHARLES ADOLPHUS GRUNDY,
children of Mrs. Grundy.

SERAPHINA, *niece of Mrs. Grundy.*

MISS FANNY FRIVOL, *friend of Seraphina.*

MASTER ARCHIBALD MCALISTER, *a dandified schoolboy.*

SCENE I.—MRS. GRUNDY'S *Parlour*.
SERAPHINA *alone.*

Seraphina. So here I am at Aunt Grundy's! This is the World at last! How I have longed for it, through the weary days at Miss Teachum's Seminary. In a Boarding Establishment for Young Ladies one cannot expect to learn a vast deal about the *World*. But my time for making an entrance on the stage of life approaches. I shall be invited to balls and assemblies, I shall meet persons of quality, and—perhaps—(*in awestruck whisper*)—*men!* I have never spoken to a man, except Papa, in all my life, but of course I shall know what to say, for have I not read romances? My speech shall be formed on that of the beautiful Lady Arabella, in "The

Earl's Elopement," though perhaps, in moments of excitement, I may forget the elegant words. Aunt Grundy, I am told, is a *very* important person in Primville, and moves in the highest circles. I fear I should feel rather dizzy myself, but perhaps one gets accustomed to it, as one does to the waltz step. I will read again what Papa says.

(*Reads.*) "MY DEAR DAUGHTER,—Now that you have finished your course at the Young Ladies' Select Seminary, and are proficient in music, dancing, modern languages, and needlework, as the prospectus promised—(only it was a false promise, dear Papa, because I'm not!)—you will no doubt consider yourself a full-fledged young woman, and think that you have attained to years of discretion. But, my dear, the most discreet young ladies of sixteen have sometimes been known to make mistakes when left to their own devices. So, as my term in India will not be over for another twelve months, I have decided to place you in the care of your Aunt Grundy until my return."

(*Speaks.*) Dear Papa, he is mistaken in thinking his daughter could be guilty of indiscretions. I regret

that he would not permit me to visit my bosom friend, Miss Fanny Frivol, who has been "out" a whole month, and knows the world thoroughly. (*Produces daguerrotype of FANNY and kisses it.*) It would be so delightful to fling ourselves together into the continuous whirl of pleasure and excitement. But, I am told, it is important to form good connections, and as my Aunt Grundy is such a great personage in Primville—Ah, here she comes!

[A stately march is played.]

GEORGINA MARY and CHARLES ADOLPHUS enter backwards, carrying books and bowing before MRS. GRUNDY, who appears in bonnet and overshoes, and carries a large umbrella.

Mrs. Grundy. That will do, my dears. Place the books on the table beside your cousin, Seraphina. I will instruct her later in their uses. But we must keep to our time-table. The lesson planned for this hour, children, is upon etiquette, a lesson so necessary to young masters and misses who wish to conduct themselves with propriety and discretion in the world.

Seraphina (*aside*). I must attend closely to this. It may be of great assistance to me at assemblies—

Mrs. Grundy. Be seated, children. We will commence with a little instruction from the "Manual of Politeness" upon "Manners at Table." (*Reads.*) "When given soup do not attempt to lap it or drink it out of your plate. Should it be

too hot, you must not blow on it or pour water from your tumbler into it. It is equally inelegant to mop your plate with your bread."

Charles A. We will never do so, Mamma.

Seraphina (*indignantly*). I should think not!

Mrs. Grundy (*reads*). "Do not eat audibly. Do not give too generous a view of the interior of your mouth to the company."

Georgina M. We will try not to do so, Mamma.

Seraphina. But such instruction is surely unnecessary!

Mrs. Grundy (*reads*). "It is most unseemly to examine closely the contents of your neighbour's plate, or to help yourself therefrom to any morsel."

Charles A. (*priggishly*). We will refrain from all such habits, Mamma.

Mrs. Grundy (*reads*). "Above all, it is quite inconsistent with the rules of gentility to make bullets of bread and hurl them at your little friends, or others of the company."

Georgina M. We should never dream of doing so, Mamma.

Seraphina (*indignantly*). Of course they wouldn't. And if they did, it would be only at your suggestion, Aunt!

Mrs. Grundy. The young person should at all times remember her place, and refrain from interrupting those older and wiser than herself.

Seraphina (*meekly*). Yes, Aunt.

Mrs. Grundy. Now a little lesson on the handkerchief.

Charles A. (anxiously aside to GEORGINA). I left mine in the rabbit-hutch!

Mrs. Grundy (reads). "Never be without a handkerchief." (*GEORGINA passes one to CHARLES behind MRS. GRUNDY'S back.*) "Avoid extreme patterns, styles, and colours." (*CHILDREN produce large handkerchiefs with striking borders.*) "Hold it freely in the hand and do not roll it into a ball. Hold it by the centre with a graceful bend at the wrist, and let the corners form a fan-like expansion." (*CHILDREN arrange their handkerchiefs.*) "Blow your nose when necessary, but do it with care and consideration for the feelings of your neighbours, for it is most ungentle to imitate the trumpet in performing this operation. Avoid sneezing with violence, which is a common fault of the absolutely uneducated. Should any one sneeze in your presence, do not repeat such expressions as 'God bless you.' It is sufficient to make a slight reverence and regard the sneezer modestly." (*Here MRS. GRUNDY sneezes, much against her will, six times, and the CHILDREN duly give six bows and six modest looks. Speaks.*) Now, children, we will turn to "Behaviour in the Street." Charles Adolphus, you are to imagine that during your walk you meet Mrs. Frizzle, the wife of the hairdresser. Make your bow. (*CHARLES bows very haughtily.*) And Georgina Mary, supposing you were to meet Miss Mincing, the little governess who instructs Lady

Shuttleworth's charming daughters. (*GEORGINA nods condescendingly.*) But now, imagine that her little charges accompany her. (*GEORGINA curtsies with radiant smile.*) And, my dears, with what manner of reverence would you greet Sir Polkinghorne Piffle and his lady, should you have the honour of meeting them on your walk?

Charles A. (with low bow, flourish of hat, and smile). How do you do, sir?

Georgina M. (with deep curtsy and affable look). How do you do, ma'am?

Seraphina. But why must they make different bows to different people? Why shouldn't the poor little governess have a curtsy, or kind old Mrs. Frizzle have a smile?

Mrs. Grundy (sharply). Seraphina, you have much to learn. One thing is to have respect for rank, above all things—next, for money. To the low-born, the dependant and the poor, kindness, of course, is due, but not affability.

Seraphina (sighing). I'm afraid I don't know very much.

Mrs. Grundy (shortly). You don't. Children, you may retire. Seraphina, you are very ignorant, but I intend that ere you meet your respected parent, you shall be well trained in social duties and etiquette by myself. I am, as every one knows, an authorised expounder of the Laws of Fashion.

Seraphina. I am all eagerness to learn, Aunt. I fear that I am a little

doubtful as to the correct behaviour of a young lady at balls—though——

Mrs. Grundy (sharply). Who spoke of balls? *Balls* indeed! For a raw, ignorant girl, fresh from the Seminary! It would be a disgrace to my name were I to allow you to appear at assemblies. When you have learnt to stand and to sit: when you know what to say and when to say it: when you have acquired an air of fashionable ease—some style or elegance of figure—(*turns her own portly figure slowly round*)—then it will be time to think about appearing in public.

Seraphina (eagerly). O Aunt! And will that be soon?

Mrs. Grundy. A question of months, perhaps years. At present you have no beauty, no manner. As to accomplishments—pray, do you perform on the harp?

Seraphina. I am willing to learn, Aunt.

Mrs. Grundy. That depends on your arms. (*Examines them.*) A young lady only plays the harp, of course, to show her arms. If these are not elegant, she should work tapestry. Now, Seraphina, you see before you a few choice works: "The Elegant Girl," Hodson's "Children's Guide to Good Breeding," "The Young Ladies' Manual." These you shall study carefully, and I will question you upon them daily.

Seraphina (meekly). Yes, Aunt.

Mrs. Grundy. It is the duty of every young lady of the respectable classes to care for the poor. I

have provided you with a work-basket, and material from which to fashion articles of clothing. They must be as coarse and unbecoming as possible. We must not encourage vanity in the poor.

Seraphina (aside, examining clothing). Oh, the *poor* Poor!

Mrs. Grundy. You will also, of course, strive to improve their minds by reading to them for two or three hours a week. The literature must be highly moral, but not interesting. The poor must not be diverted.

Seraphina (aside, reading names of tracts). "Snatched from the Downward Path," "The Drunkard's Doom, or Cured by Cold Water." Ah, the poor, *poor* Poor!

Mrs. Grundy. These shall be your duties. Some two or three hours, daily, shall be set aside for practising the pianoforte and harp. You shall have relaxation from your studies in the shape of sick visiting, or taking exercise with Sarah in the Park, or working your embroidery while Georgina Mary reads some instructive work aloud. When I am pleased with your progress you will be permitted to pay a few afternoon calls with me in the coach. But this shall be altered if I find I have given you *too* much leisure.

Seraphina (with amazement). Too much leisure!

Mrs. Grundy. You will now proceed with that garment which I have cut out for the washerwoman's youngest. But don't make it too

smart. Remember, I do not encourage vanity in the poor.

[Exit MRS. GRUNDY.]

Seraphina (*holding up shapeless garment*). Don't make it too smart!

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.—MRS. GRUNDY *in centre of the room. By her a table, laden with gifts for the poor. GEORGINA MARY and CHARLES ADOLPHUS, with baskets, receive instructions as to their distribution.*

Mrs. Grundy. Generosity, my dears, is one of the greatest possible virtues. See to it that in early youth you acquire a habit of cheerfully giving to those less fortunate than yourselves. Now, these oranges, Charles Adolphus, you shall take in your basket to John Trustful's children. There are fourteen of them, so that it will be half an orange each. They are not so *very* much mildewed, I think. At least, they can cut off the bad parts.

Charles A. (*examines oranges carefully*). Yes, Mamma, the *centres* must be quite good still.

Mrs. Grundy. Never grudge, never grudge anything to the poor. Georgina Mary, I found this old bottle of medicine in my cupboard. The inscription on the label is quite obliterated, but it is a shame to waste it, and Sally Scrubbins, having such a bad chest complaint, may be very grateful for it.

Georgina M. (*taking bottle*). Is it to be taken internally, or only for outward application, Mamma?

Mrs. Grundy. I quite forget, my dear. Did I not tell you that I cannot read the label? Let her try it inside and out and see which does her most good.

Georgina M. Yes, Mamma. (*Aside.*) I do hope Sally Scrubbins won't die!

Mrs. Grundy. Now this pot of dripping—good beef dripping, Charles Adolphus—I shall send as a treat to Widow Worthy. It has been in our larder for weeks, but I don't think it is so very—

[*Sniffs at it and pulls a face.*

Hands it to the CHILDREN, who sniff and hold their noses.

Charles A. Shall I take it to her, Mamma? It seems a little bit—rancid.

Mrs. Grundy. The poor cannot afford to be nice. Take it to her, Charles Adolphus, and say I wish her to return the pot.

Charles A. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Grundy. Here is the clothing, Georgina Mary, for the Scanty family, and put in a few temperance tracts for old Thomas Scanty. His wife, I noticed, is sadly in need of an umbrella. Here is an old one of mine, but—(*doubtfully*)—it is still very good. I must not be rash, and Seraphina could sew up those rents.

[*Examines several enormous holes.*

Charles A. My umbrella, Mamma, is a *little* more worn than yours. Shall I fetch it, ma'am?

Mrs. Grundy. Do so, my child.

This one is far too new. (CHARLES brings the framework of an umbrella with a few rags clinging to it.) Ah, yes, with a little alteration, this one would be sufficient to shelter Susan Scanty. I will take it myself and point out its merits, as perhaps she might be a little incredulous as to its capacity for sheltering—in its present condition. Come, children, distribute the tracts generously, with little words of warning or encouragement when necessary. Give cheerfully, give cheerfully!

[*Exeunt* MRS. GRUNDY and CHILDREN.]

Enter SERAPHINA, R., *sighing, and carrying piles of sewing. Enter* FANNY FRIVOL, L., *with a great rush, falling on SERAPHINA'S neck.*

Fanny Frivol. Ah, my dearest creature! To think that I should find you at last! It seems a hundred thousand years since the cruel destinies tore us from each others' arms at that abominable Seminary.

Seraphina. O Fanny! You are indeed welcome. Dear, I am the most miserable girl in the world!

Fanny. La! Seraphina! What is it, my love? Weren't you invited to the county ball?

Seraphina. Don't speak to me of balls, dearest Fanny. I am never allowed anything more exciting than tea-drinkings, accompanied by my Aunt.

Fanny. Your Aunt? La! (*Twirls round to display her clothing.*) What do you think of my new burnous?

Five shillings a yard! This little frock, too—silk lined. But I hear of Mrs. Grundy everywhere. How you must detest her!

Seraphina. I do, indeed. Is it very, *very* wicked not to love your relations?

Fanny. La! No, indeed! I loathe all mine! Everybody tells me she commands the whole town. No one can wink an eyelash but she knows it. It's "What will Mrs. Grundy say to *this?*" and "We must please the proprieties and Mrs. Grundy." But, my *sweetest* creature—why these tears? Confide in your own Fanny.

Seraphina (in tragic tones). Do you see this?

Fanny. Yes. An odious duster.

Seraphina. This is for running down the road with Georgina Mary's hoop. I have to hem it. Young ladies must never run. They must walk genteelly.

Fanny. The monster! Why, I—I—I could slap her!

Seraphina. Fanny! Slap my Aunt Grundy? Fie! This—(*holds up another duster*)—is for kissing the charwoman's baby in the street, and not apologising to Lady Polkinghorne Piffle when she trod on my toe in passing.

Fanny. My dear love—it is positively shameful!

Seraphina. This—(*holds up a third*)—is for walking round the pond with a gentleman who expressed a wish to converse with me.

Fanny. La! and you were not introduced?

Seraphina (innocently). No. What is introduced? He was very kind, Fanny, and he said—(bashfully)—that I was a monstrous pretty girl.

Fanny (condescendingly). So you would be, my love, if you were dressed. (Arranging her own flounces.) But I am resolved that you shall come and stay with me, and then we will carry out all our plans that we made in that dull old Seminary.

Seraphina. In the dormitory—at dead of night!

Fanny. Yes. We will both be beautiful heroines and break men's hearts.

[Breaks an imaginary heart in her fingers and stamps on it.]

Seraphina. As they did in "The Wooing of Dulciana," the wicked novel that you used to keep under your mattress?

Fanny (arranging her ringlets at the mirror). Talking about hearts reminds me that you have broken one already.

Seraphina. O Fanny, whose?

Fanny. Archibald McAlister's. He swears you are the most beautiful creature in the world!

Seraphina. Archibald McAlister, from the Young Gentlemen's Academy? But we have so seldom met!

Fanny. He gazed at you most ardently in church, and was thrown into paroxysms of joy when you deigned to glance at him.

Seraphina (reflectively). He did stare, I remember. But I was looking at one of the other young gentlemen.

Fanny (strutting in front of stage). And they couldn't take their eyes from me, I vow! I wore my blue tarlatan, with the sweetest fringed mantelet. And a rice-straw chapeau, demi-Pamela shape—oh, ravishing! But, Seraphina, Archibald bids me tell you that he wishes to correspond.

Seraphina. I fear that Aunt would not approve—and I don't know how to write a letter to a gentleman. I must refer to "The Family Adviser." (Reads.) "Lamb, Fried in Slices," "Lamp Wicks from Old Stockings," "Legs, Cramp in the," ah—"Letter-writing."

Fanny. And Archibald also tells me that unless he can obtain an interview with you his heart will be absolutely lacerated!

Seraphina (looks up from book). An interview? I am positive Aunt would never permit him to visit me, Fanny.

Fanny. Silly donkey! You must meet in secret, of course.

Seraphina. I must look it up. (Reads.) "Infectious diseases," "Insects, bites of," "Interviews." But—(in distressed tones)—dearest Fanny, what do you do when a gentleman breaks his heart?

Fanny. Oh, that doesn't signify. I break scores every day! Besides, he may be your Fate. We will consult the Oracle.

[Feels in pocket for small book.]

Seraphina. The Oracle?

Fanny (mysteriously, producing book). Here it is. "The Ladies' Oracle, Being an Infallible Prophet

of the Male Sex." Don't breathe a word to a *soul*. I wouldn't have any one know about it for the *world*! You ask one of these questions—which do you choose?

Seraphina. I think this one. "*Ought I to believe the tender vows that are breathed to me?*" Only, Fanny, he hasn't breathed them yet!

Fanny. La! No matter! Now put your finger on these signs, shut your eyes—there—*now* I'll find the answer.

Seraphina. Oh, I am so agitated. Is it all true? What, *what* is the answer?

Fanny. Here it is. (*Reads.*) "*Mash two barrels for three-quarters of an hour—*" Oh no, that's all about *beer*! I must be looking at the recipe end of the book. Ah, this is the answer—"On no account. He is false." Pooh! What foolishness! Never mind, I'll ask one for myself now. "*Shall I soon be courted?*" That is excessively amusing, because I am already courted by—(*counts on her fingers*)—more gentlemen than I can count!

Seraphina (*eagerly*). And the answer, Fanny?

Fanny (*reads*). "*Grate a raw red carrot—*" Bother! That's the recipe end again! Here is my answer. "*You will be wrinkled before that time arrives.*" (*Flings down book.*) Tiresome thing! I will never consult that odious Oracle again! But, oh heavens! is that your Aunt's step upon the stair?

Seraphina. Alas! yes, Fanny.

Fanny. My love, I must fly. Here are a few pretty tales for you. "Horrid Mysteries," "The Hidden Crime"—read these for my sake—(*opens parasol*)—and dream of me in the fashionable world. Good-bye, dearest creature. (*Hugs SERAPHINA.*) If ever I meet that odious, detestable woman, your Aunt Grundy, I will give her a piece of my mind! I'll go up to her, like this—(*struts defiantly*)—and say to her—and say to her——

Enter MRS. GRUNDY to music, followed by CHILDREN. FANNY FRIVOL backs humbly before her right across the stage, meekly dropping a curtsey.

Fanny. Good morning, ma'am!

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.—MRS. GRUNDY'S *Parlour*. SERAPHINA *discovered sewing*. GEORGINA MARY *reads aloud*.

Georgina M. (*reads*). "With what elegance and ease the Lady Arabella reclined among her cushions in one of the spacious apartments of her magnificent mansion! A faint flush mounted to her cheek of alabaster as a handsome coach dashed up the avenue of stately elms. 'Welcome, Lord Fitzmaurice,' she exclaimed, languidly extending her lily hand——"

Seraphina. Skip all that, Georgina Mary, and get on to the elopement.

Georgina M. (*reads*). "'Mine! Mine!' cried Lord Fitzmaurice, as

he bore the fainting form of Lady Arabella down the magnificent flight of marble steps. He—"Cousin, I hear the hour strike below. Mamma will require my services.

[Exit GEORGINA MARY.

Seraphina. Life is becoming almost unbearable! Forced to apply myself to plain sewing until I am mistress of my needle! Forbidden to mix in the youthful society of Primville until I am versed in all the politenesses and elegancies which denote a young lady of good breeding! The Lady Arabella, I am sure, did not care whether the poor were protected from the inclemencies of the winter—when she eloped with Lord Fitzmaurice in a coach and six. (*Sighs.*) The birds are singing outside—(*cuckoo sounds*)—so sweetly! They know that spring has come—(*cuckoo sounds*)—but how should I, who sit here sewing, always alone?

Archibald (*approaches window outside and calls*). *Seraphina!*

Seraphina (*aside*). No, not alone. Now, how would a young lady of fashion behave if addressed by a very slight acquaintance—*male* acquaintance, from beneath her window? (*Searches book.*) Let me see. "*Bleaching Straw Bonnets*," no, that's not it—"Cure for Baldness," "*Convulsions*"—no. Ah, here it is. "*Morning Calls*." "*Be hearty in your reception of guests, and where you see much diffidence assist the stranger to throw it off.*"

Archibald. *Seraphina!*

Seraphina. What is diffidence, I

wonder? It must be some kind of wrap. Perhaps an overcoat.

Archibald (*appearing at window*). Loadstar of my existence! I beg you to accept a humble tribute from your devoted admirer. (*Hands SERAPHINA a tin of peppermints.*) Don't eat them until I've gone, *Seraphina*, will you now?

Seraphina. Sir, this is an unexpected pleasure. Will you not enter?—but don't scrape the paint or Aunt will discover it. Take a seat in my desolate habitation—I might say prison-house—and, and—throw off your great-coat!

Archibald. I thank you, beauteous *Seraphina*, for your hospitality, but I cannot enter the dwelling of my bitterest enemy, your Aunt. (*Anxiously.*) Do take the peppermints! I'm sinking in this flower-bed.

Seraphina. A thousand thanks! O *Archibald*, they are just the kind I like! (*Reads mottoes on peppermints.*) "*I love thee*," "*Give me thy heart*," "*I am thine*." I must just eat this heart-shaped one that says "*Be mine!*" But what have you there, *Archibald*? A musical instrument, I vow!

Archibald. 'Tis but my guitar. I came with the intention of giving you a serenade.

Seraphina. Only it is not night!

Archibald. I do not find it convenient to come at night. *Seraphina*, I beg you to sit still and listen.

Seraphina (*aside*). They are very strict at the Young Gentlemen's Academy.

Archibald (strikes a few chords and sings) :

Seraphina, sad and sweet,
Sighing in your close retreat,
Listen to your love, for he
Comes in haste to set you free.
Hark, the birds are singing, too—
With your lover calling you!

[Cuckoo sounds.]

Promise him that you will one day
Fly with him from Mrs. Grundy.

Seraphina, turn your eyes
From the seams that cause your sighs
To your love who finds you fair,
Loves your eyes, your lips, your hair,
Loves your cheek of white and rose.
All unlessoned—this he knows—
Never, never has there been a
Maid so fair as Seraphina!

Seraphina (listening with wrapt air). What an *enchanting* song! I am *ravished*! And is it your own composition, Archibald?

Archibald. I wrote it—at—at least—I c-copied it in my own hand-writing.

Seraphina. Who, *who* composed it?

Archibald (reluctantly). Jenkins Minor—but I told him the gist of it. It was only, Seraphina, that my feelings were too deep for expression.

Seraphina. O Archibald!

Enter GEORGINA slowly, sewing a large sheet which trails behind her.

Sh-sh— Go! *[To ARCHIBALD.]*

Georgina M. I have come to sit with you, cousin, until my seam is finished. *[Sits on stool.]*

Seraphina. Dear Georgina Mary, you are *too* kind. Pray run and romp with Charles Adolphus.

Georgina M. (pointing to time-table). I only romp from twelve to one.

Seraphina. Then does not Aunt need you? I am quite content to be alone.

Georgina M. You complained of the solitary hours. (*Loud sneeze outside.*) Oh! what was that?

Seraphina (starts up and looks out). It is—it must be—the gardener! He has—he had—a terrible cold—the other day—*once*!

Georgina M. I will take him some lozenges of Mamma's. They are unpalatable, but would be most beneficial. *[Starts off.]*

Seraphina. No, no, Georgina Mary, you cannot *think* of going out in your thin slippers!

Georgina M. Of course, I will wear my overshoes.

Seraphina (glancing out). But it is too late, he has gone to—to the pig-styes.

Georgina M. (sits down patiently with sewing). Then I shall wait his return.

Seraphina (desperately). Dearest Georgina Mary, I have broken my last needle. Could you run to my bedroom, and look in the left-hand top drawer of the bureau. In the right-hand corner you will find my satin-wood workbox, and inside you will find my red flannel emery bag, and in that—*perhaps* you will find a needle.

Georgina M. Yes, I will fetch it quickly, cousin.

[Exit slowly, trailing sheet across stage.]

Seraphina (rushing to window).

Archibald, I beg you to retire. Pray, pray go!

Archibald. But, dearest, loveliest Seraphina, I have had scarce one word with you! I wish to tell you of my admiration, my adoration. Seraphina, I dream of you by night. Your image is before me all the day!

Seraphina (innocently). How can you then perform your tasks?

Archibald. I cannot! I cannot! Therefore I beseech you to fly with me—to leave this prison-house, to defy that she-dragon your Aunt, and those little prigs, your cousins——

Enter CHARLES ADOLPHUS.

Seraphina (to ARCHIBALD). Sh-sh! Begone! Begone swiftly!

Charles A. Cousin, have you seen my Latin Grammar? I must have left it here. I have searched the house.

Seraphina. No, dear Charles, I am sure it is not here. I think I saw it upstairs—(*hesitatingly*)—one day.

Charles A. Are you not lonely, Seraphina? I think I will come and sit awhile with you. (*Sound of guitar outside.*) Oh! what was that?

Seraphina (agitatedly). Nothing—unless perhaps one of the hens in the garden.

Charles A. It must be the young bantam cockerel that has escaped again.

[*Rushes to window.* SERAPHINA desperately bars his way.

Seraphina. Charles dear, didn't I hear Aunt calling you? Her voice sounded angry. Hadn't you better run, dear?

Charles A. (running). Coming, Mamma!

Seraphina (to ARCHIBALD). Oh, will you not go? I shall have another duster to hem—perhaps worse!

Archibald. Not until you promise to fly with me. We could drive in a coach and six to Gretna Green——

Seraphina. Yes. Gretna Green sounds a pretty place, Archibald.

Archibald. And there be wed.

Seraphina. O Archibald! Will you be able to continue your studies?

Archibald (crossly). Of course not, silly. Married men don't study.

Seraphina (in offended tones). Silly!

Archibald. I beg your pardon, but, Seraphina, I cannot live without you. Promise——

Seraphina. Listen! Oh, fly, fly! All is lost! It is Aunt!

Archibald. You will consent to the elopement?

Seraphina. Anything, anything—begone!

Archibald. Next Monday morning at six?

Seraphina. Yes—oh yes. Fly!

[*Music and footsteps heard.*

CURTAIN.

SCENE IV.—SERAPHINA discovered alone, reading a letter.

Seraphina (reads). "My Own Seraphina"—(Archibald is, I think, a

little premature)—“can you make all necessary preparations and be ready to fly with me at ten o'clock on Monday morning? I have ascertained that your Aunt Grundy will be presiding at a mothers' meeting in Primville at that hour. Do not be late. I will await you by the pig-styes at the bottom of the garden, and we will proceed northward by the stage-coach.” (By the stage-coach! How unromantic!) “My pecuniary position is such that I am unable to provide the private primrose-coloured chaise and six that I originally intended—but have no doubt that my father will supply me with a suitable fortune when we are wed. By the pig-styes, remember, sweetest—at ten.—Ever thine,

“ARCHIBALD.”

“P.S.—If perchance the hour of the mothers' meeting should be altered, hang a red rag from your window.”

Seraphina. Ten o'clock! Now, how can I tell what time it is? There is not a clock in the room. But I had best make some preparations for the drive.

[*Loud knock on door.*]

Enter ARCHIBALD, breathless, carrying several large band-boxes, a carpet-bag, and a wooden box labelled “live stock.”

Archibald (angrily). Seraphina, are you never coming? I have been waiting by that unsavoury smelling pig-stye, in the rain, for half-an-hour. (*Piles up band-boxes and*

carpet-bag.) It was horribly uncomfortable, I can tell you. Aren't you ready? Where's your bonnet? Where are your trunks?

Seraphina (reproachfully). O Archibald—to speak to me so!

Archibald (impatiently). Well, you see, a man can't be kept waiting. But, sweetest, had you not better prepare for the journey?

Seraphina (stuffing a pair of slippers into a reticule). I am ready, Archibald. But, alas! You are hurt! Why is your face covered with court-plaster?

Archibald (swaggering). A mere nothing! I cut myself when shaving.

Seraphina. But surely you don't yet shave?

Archibald (indignantly). I have shaved for a—a—for three days!

[*Produces razor from pocket.*]

Seraphina. Oh, what a funny little saw!

Archibald. Poor ignorant child! Don't you know a razor when you see it?

Seraphina. But it is so like a saw. Why is the edge so jagged?

Archibald. Cutting your initials on a stone bench didn't improve it, and I sometimes use it for sharpening slate-pencils. (*Cuts string of carpet-bag.*) I hope I packed my shaving brush.

[*Rummages in bag and produces many strange articles.*]

Seraphina. Archibald, you are upsetting things. There are pickles all over the floor, and everything smells dreadfully of vinegar!

Archibald. Never mind, the rest are safe somewhere in the bag. Bother! (*Holds up broken jar.*) And I meant them for our wedding breakfast! My cravats, too, all spoilt!

Seraphina. What is in this wooden box?

Archibald (swaggering). Oh, that's my ferret. Look out! (*SERAPHINA pokes her finger in hole, is bitten, and screams.*) Hush, you'll rouse the house. I'll bind your finger with my handkerchief. A man can't travel without his ferret, you know. (*Winds a dirty rag round her finger.*) Seraphina, you're looking monstrous pretty. Why had you no greeting for me when I came?

Seraphina (drying her eyes). I forgot to shake hands. That was rude of me, Archibald. I apologise.

Archibald. Shake hands! But surely you will give me a kiss?

Seraphina (shocked). Kiss you? O Archibald! And you are not even a relation?

Archibald. B—but I am just going to be!

Seraphina. No, indeed, Archibald. Only a connection by marriage.

Archibald (sulkily). If you are going to be unreasonable I don't think I shall take you. You don't seem to realise the extent of my unselfishness and magnanimity in offering to share my all with an ignorant gir—with a beautiful but penniless damsel.

Seraphina (anxiously). You are never going to change your mind! Oh, I beg of you to take me, Archi-

bald. I *must* go now, because I have left a note of good-bye on Aunt's pincushion.

Archibald. Then, Seraphina, you will salute me in a fitting manner. I am not going to be thwarted by a woman.

Seraphina. O Archibald, I cannot. (*Aside.*) I did not dream he would appear so unromantic—so—so almost comic!

Archibald (angrily). Come, Seraphina—

Seraphina (hurriedly). Allow me first to look the matter up in "The Family Adviser." (*Reads.*) "Potato Snow"—"To Loosen Glass Stoppers of Bottles"—"Destruction of Rats"—Ah, here it is—"Engagements"—No, it doesn't say, and anyway, Archibald, I fear it would be unladylike.

Archibald (sitting down angrily). Then I stay here until you see reason.

Seraphina. Then you may stay for ever. (*Sits down—aside.*) This is not the dashing suitor of my dreams. He is but a coxcomb, a schoolboy. Oh, how blind I have been! But a young lady who breaks off her engagement violates all the laws of good breeding. I *must* elope now, I suppose, and regret it all my days. (*Sighs.*) If only Aunt Grundy—

[*Music.*

Enter AUNT GRUNDY. Lovers discovered sitting angrily back to back.

Mrs. Grundy. Sir! (*Lovers start up suddenly.*) To what do I owe the pleasure of this visit?

Archibald (nervously). M—madam, I was merely making a morning call on your niece.

Mrs. Grundy. And these band-boxes? Will you kindly explain their meaning?

Archibald. Th—they are a few purchases I have been making.

Mrs. Grundy. For my niece?

Archibald. F—for myself, madam.

Mrs. Grundy. Seraphina, is this gentleman's statement correct? Was he making a mere morning call?

Seraphina (tearfully). No, Aunt.

Mrs. Grundy. What was the intention of this visit?

Seraphina. We—we were *meaning* to elope, but I think, Aunt, that we both regret our intentions.

Mrs. Grundy. THE IMPUDENT PUPPY! Archibald McAlister, do you think you can deceive me with that attempt at disguise? Do you think that a large hat, an upturned collar, and court-plaster on your chin, will blind one who, but a few years ago, dandled you on her knee and gave you a blue flannel duck on wheels? Undeserving wretch! Begone, boy! I will inform your father how richly you deserve the whipping that he will no doubt give to you.

[*MRS. GRUNDY seizes ARCHIBALD by the coat collar, forcibly ejects him, and upsets the ferret cage. Ferret escapes and runs across stage. MRS. GRUNDY and SERAPHINA mount, screaming, on chairs.*

CURTAIN for a few moments.

Seraphina. How frightened he looked! Not in the least like the dashing Lord Fitzmaurice, who, with a muffled oath, folded the Lady Arabella in his cloak, and with drawn sword defied her irate parent. And if Aunt Grundy had not come, I might have been driving out in the rain with that sulky boy. How could I have thought it would be romantic? It would have been horrid.

Enter FANNY FRIVOL.

Fanny (breathlessly). Oh, you sweetest creature in the world! Oh, you duck—you darling! (*Hugs SERAPHINA and dances round her.*) Did I hear aright? Have you been planning an elopement? You are a woman of spirit after all. A girl after my own heart!—A positive duck! (*Draws a chair close to SERAPHINA.*) And now tell me all about it. What *he* said and what *you* said. How *deliciously* romantic! Did you feel thrills?

Seraphina (shortly). No!

Fanny. No thrills! You odd creature! But you look sad, my sweet friend. Ah, of course, it is because your plans have been frustrated—foiled by that abominable Aunt Grundy! But, darling, you must come and pay me a *long* visit. I will not *hear* of a refusal. Will it not be delightful? Oh, you angel, won't it?

[*Squeezes SERAPHINA'S hand.*

Seraphina (dragging her hand away). No.

Fanny (with surprise). Seraphina, I could almost imagine that you do not reciprocate my affection. But that *cannot* be! We have vowed eternal friendship.

Seraphina (aside). Ah, how deeply I regret it!

Fanny. We will have such entrancing times. Dancing every night until four in the morning. (*Dances round the stage.*) Nothing but calls and teas and delicious scandal. And you shall see your Archibald every day——

Seraphina. I don't want to.

Fanny. Not wish to see him? This is pique! You are shamed by the interference of your hateful aunt. *Wretched woman!* Why do you not defy her? Why do you not stand before her and say, "Aunt, I am determined to leave this prison, where you make my life a burden and blight my youthful affections. I fly to the arms of my beloved Fanny Frivol. With her I will live the life of a butterfly—scoff at all restrictions! Flip my fingers at the shocked, upraised hands of pious Primville! Revel in pleasure—in admiration——" Oh, the old *cat!* I can see her face as you say it—ha, ha, ha!

Seraphina (coldly). Miss Frivol, I desire that you should not speak of my Aunt in such disrespectful terms. You are very kind, but I had rather not visit you. My dear Papa wishes that I should stay with Aunt Grundy until I learn to distinguish true pleasures from empty frivolity. And I think—I *think* I wish so, too.

(*Bursts into tears.*) Oh, I am so unhappy!

Fanny (rising with mock horror). Oh, la, la, la, la, la! Beauty in tears! This is no place for me, I can't abide 'em. (*Points at SERAPHINA.*) Once Fanny Frivol's dearest friend, but now—(*looking prim*)—a dutiful daughter to Papa. Good-bye, sweetest! (*Kisses her hand mockingly.*) I will run round to all the old school companions to tell of your misfortune. Don't be surprised, my sweet, if your ears burn a little. (*Pulls SERAPHINA'S ears.*) The whole town will buzz with it! Frustrated elopements don't happen every day! Good-bye, love!

[*Exit FANNY FRIVOL, kissing her hand, and imitating SERAPHINA'S sobs.*]

Enter MRS. GRUNDY to soft music, unknown to SERAPHINA.

Seraphina (sobbing). Oh, what shall I do? I shall be the laughing-stock of Primville—of the whole world. I will never go out of this house without a thick veil. I will never violate the rules of female decorum again!

Mrs. Grundy. Seraphina, this outrage——

Seraphina (interrupting). O Aunt, how I deplore my rash act!

Mrs. Grundy. This outrageous conduct——

Seraphina (impetuously). I beg your forgiveness, Aunt!

Mrs. Grundy. Deserves severe——
Seraphina (quickly). Indeed, it

does, Aunt. I will hasten to make amends for all my folly.

Enter CHARLES ADOLPHUS.

Charles A. A gentleman to see you in the hall, Mamma.

[*Exit* MRS. GRUNDY. SERAPHINA weeps.

Charles A. (*aside*). How can I cheer Cousin Seraphina in these distressing circumstances? (*Sits down and opens box.*) Here are all my dearest treasures—my books—"The Basket of Flowers," "Little Mary and her Cat"—no, they are too dear to me. My slate? Oh, no! I cannot part with that. (*Hugs slate.*) Nor my top, nor my *Latin Grammar*! (*Embraces the Latin Grammar.*) But if this large glass alley will alleviate her distress in any way—(*doubtfully*)—she is very welcome to it.

Enter GEORGINA MARY.

Georgina M. I wish I might show my sympathy for Cousin Seraphina, who is in such sad disgrace. (*Opens playbox.*) Here are my most valued possessions. (*Takes out each one in turn, shakes her head and sighs.*) Here is a piece of crochet that I did myself. I cannot *think* what it could be used for—but it *might* please Cousin Seraphina.

[CHARLES ADOLPHUS and GEORGINA MARY approach SERAPHINA on either side.

Charles A. Cousin, could you derive any comfort from this glass alley? If so—(*reluctantly*)—it is yours. [*Presents it with averted face.*

Georgina M. Cousin, I crocheted this with my own hands. Will you accept it as a token of my regard?

Seraphina (*hysterically*). Oh, thank you, thank you! They are the very things I wanted!

Charles A. And now—(*drawing his stool close*)—will you tell us some more stories about real, nice, naughty little boys and girls.

Georgina M. And about all the bad things you did at the Seminary?

Seraphina (*drying her eyes*). You dears. I begin almost to like you.

Georgina M. and Charles A. And we love you, Cousin Seraphina.

Seraphina. And almost—almost I could like Aunt——

Music heard. *Enter* MRS. GRUNDY.

Mrs. Grundy. Niece, I should have punished you to-day, as I have done before, for all your past misbehaviour. But I see, my child, that you repent of your mistake, and there can be no punishment greater than the knowledge that you have made yourself ridiculous. So now, rather than reprimand you, I have come to inform you of a great treat in store.

Georgina M. O Mamma, *what?*

Seraphina. O Aunt, how very, very kind of you to forgive me thus!

Mrs. Grundy. I have taken seats for us all to-night at a very interesting lecture——

Georgina M. (*excitedly*). O Mamma! On what subject?

Mrs. Grundy (unfolds a large notice and reads). Here is the bill :—

"*Pleasant Half-hours in the Catacombs,*" being a lecture on Christian Archæologists and their work—in the caves of Cassibile, Agregentum, and Syracuse.

"The following subjects will be touched upon :—

"*The Persecutions of Diocletian. Holy Mysteries in the Catacombs of Pretextatus. Christian Art of the Pre-Constantine Era. Hieroglyphic and Idio-graphic Period. Sculpture and Sarcophagi.*

Charles A. (jumping for joy). How delightful! O Mamma, I hope it will be long.

Mrs. Grundy. Quite a short lecture, my dear, from five to nine, but a class will be held afterwards, in which the Professor will answer intelligent questions.

Georgina (clasping hands rapturously). A lecture—four hours long! Isn't that a treat, Seraphina? Are you not delighted?

Seraphina (doubtfully). Y-y-e-es. I am delighted. Thank you, Aunt.

Mrs. Grundy. Children, it is the hour for you to take a little gentle exercise in the front garden, for the sake of your constitutions. Seraphina has been deprived, by several unfortunate events, of her usual hour of reflection. We leave you, Seraphina, to your thoughts.

Seraphina. Thank you, Aunt.

[Exit MRS. GRUNDY and CHILDREN.]

Seraphina. Half-hours in the Catacombs!—Hieroglyphic and Idio-graphic!—The Persecutions of Diocletian!—The Catacombs of Pretextatus!—Christian Art of the Pre-Constantine Era!—Sculpture and Sarcophagi!—Oh dear—dear! How *inexpressibly* dull! But I suppose she meant it kindly. After that insufferable coxcomb, Archibald, and that malicious Fanny Frivol—I do not desire to choose my own acquaintance. If the people in the world are as foolish as Archibald, Fanny, and myself—some one like Aunt must be very necessary. She is kinder than I thought, and the children, now I know them better, are almost human. I have decided to be guided by Aunt until I have seen enough of life to judge for myself. And this is my first step into the world! A lecture on the Catacombs—four hours long! Poor people of Primville, how stiff they will get! (*Rises and stretches.*) Poor Primville—it is all under her thumb—just as I am—just as Georgina Mary and Charles Adolphus are. It can't get away from Mrs. Grundy!

Enter MRS. GRUNDY and CHILDREN in outdoor clothes. CHILDREN sing a song.

SONG.

Little bread-and-butter Miss,
I'm compelled to tell you this,
You'll be let loose in the world to wander
one day.

You'll rejoice to break the rule
As you could not do at school,
But—you cannot get away from Mrs.
Grundy!

You will think the world is sweet,
All its gifts are at your feet,
'Tis a garden made for pleasure, love, and
laughter.

You'll be gaily indiscreet,
Take for friend the first you meet,
But you have to take the consequences
after!

For this life is just a school,
Full of precept and of rule,
Crammed with duties dull, to Saturday
from Monday.
And if you disobey,
Or scorn what people say,
Why!—You have to face the wrath of
Mrs. Grundy!

CURTAIN.

PERSEUS¹

A GREEK PLAY

(Arranged and adapted from Kingsley's "Heroes")

By FANNY JOHNSON

Author of "Cræsus," a Classical Play; "Dramatic Scenes from History";
"Dramatic Scenes from Literature."

THE first scene in this play is laid in the house of Polydectes, and, with a few unimportant exceptions, can be made after the manner described in connection with "Pygmalion." The curtained corner used in that play will not, of course be necessary for the production of "Perseus," any more than will the altar to Aphrodite. At one side of the stage a few skins should be spread in a careless fashion—Perseus falling asleep upon them before he perceives the vision of Athene.

Act II. should open with a slip-scene—*i.e.* a scene formed with the back-cloth near the front of the stage—the following scene being in course of preparation behind it. This back-cloth must resemble the Unshapen Land, and should be painted with snow scenery similar to that already described for the cloth of the "Snow Queen." There is no necessity to have wings for this slip-scene, but if desired they can be made to resemble rocks, one of which contains a cave.

When this back-cloth is removed the scenery already prepared behind it—The Garden of the Hesperides—will be revealed in all its beauty. To the right of the stage is the Tree with the Golden Fruit, which can be made of a large T of wood, according to the illustration, Fig. 1, which shows the tree as viewed from the back. The trunk, cut from cardboard, is tacked to the wooden upright, whilst from the cross-piece, and tacked to the supports, is hung canvas painted with suitable foliage. The tree is suspended by cords from the flies, and is further secured by a stay stretching from the point A to the ground. Gilded apples or balls to represent the Golden Fruit can be tacked through the canvas to the wooden supports. Around the base of

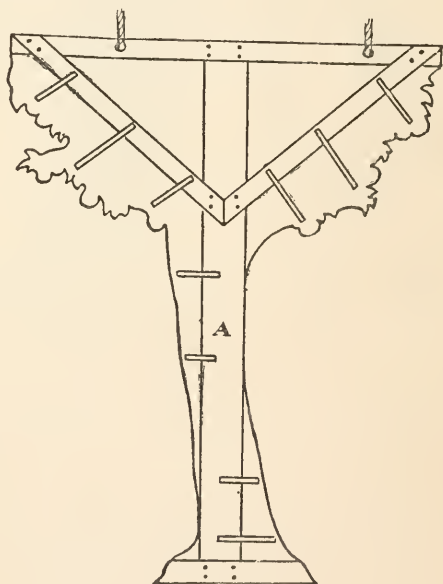


FIG. 1

¹ Permission to perform this play in public must be obtained from the author.

the tree a large serpent, similar to that described in "King Uggermugger," should be coiled in a natural manner. Atlas speaks from raised steps or a platform behind the back-cloth, and is only seen (from the waist upwards) when Perseus shows him Medusa's head, page 371.

The first scene in Act III. can also be a slip-scene to represent the desert—a waste of sand with the horizon broken by one or two distant pyramids. The curtain rising upon Scene II. reveals the seashore of Joppa, painted in a similar



FIG. 2



FIG. 3



FIG. 4



FIG. 5

fashion to that described in "The Little Mermaid." Against the right wing stands Andromeda, chained to the rock, awaiting her fate.

COSTUMES

The Mortal Men.—In no play is greater care required than in the present to insure the accuracy of the costumes. A most diligent study should be made of any Greek vases or sculpture that may be accessible, as only thus is it possible to have the dresses in keeping with one another. The long chlamys illustrated in Fig. 2 will prove suitable for the men, differences in colour, &c., being introduced for the sake of distinction. The chlamys consists of a large cloak buckled over the shoulder and hanging loose otherwise. Beneath it a simple tunic can be worn—the arms being left bare.

The Mortal Women.—So far as the women are concerned, the costume illustrated in Fig. 3 can be adapted in different ways. This is simply a long gown, around which a large shawl is wound, reaching to below the knees. The hair should be dressed in the old style depicted in the figure, and bound round with ribbon or golden bands. Andromeda will require a somewhat plainer costume, and may be dressed like Pandora in "The Paradise of Children."

Perseus, the semi-Mortal.—Although apparelled as an ordinary mortal in the first part of the play, Perseus must wear the goatskin and winged sandals, from Act II. to the end. An idea of this costume is given in Fig. 4, which needs no explanation. Beneath the goatskin cloak he carries the Gorgon's head, and on his head is the hat of darkness.

The Immortals.—There are certain attributes always associated with the various Immortals which must be made the subject of careful study. A typical costume for Pallas Athene is shown in Fig. 5, which depicts her holding aside the veil which should otherwise shroud her face. Hermes should wear a handsome chlamys, and appear with the famous winged sandals which he gives to Perseus.

The three Grey Sisters are dressed simply in grey, and have long white dishevelled hair falling about their shoulders. Each must have both eyes covered with black patches, and they must hand the tooth and eye from one to the other with querulous haste.

The three Hesperides may wear light flowing garments, their hair falling freely down the back, being bound with garlands of flowers.

The greatest care should be exercised throughout this play to maintain the majestic nature of the story. Where possible the attitudes and actions of the performers should be based upon the figures represented on vases and in statuary, and every suggestion of staginess must be sedulously avoided.

PERSEUS

The scene is laid at *Seriphos* (Act I.) in the *Unshapen Land* (Act II. scene i.), and the *Garden of the Hesperides* (Act II. scene ii.) in *Libya*, (Act III. scene i.) and *Iopa* (Joppa) (Act III. scene ii.).

Time of Representation, about an Hour and a Half.

CHARACTERS.

MORTALS—

POLYDECTES, *King of Seriphos.*

DICTYS, *brother of Polydectes.*

CEPHEUS, *King of Iopa.*

PHINEUS, *brother of Cepheus.*

A SON OF PHINEUS.

DANAË, *mother of Perseus.*

CASSIOPEIA, *wife of Cepheus.*

ANDROMEDA, *daughter of Cepheus and Cassiopeia.*

ATTENDANTS AND SLAVES OF POLYDECTES AND CEPHEUS.

EGYPTIAN GIRLS AND PRIEST.

SEMI-MORTAL OR HERO; PERSEUS, *son of Zeus and Danaë.*

IMMORTALS—

PALLAS ATHENE, *the Queen of the Immortals.*

HERMES, *the Messenger of the Gods.*

ATLAS, *who holds heaven upon his shoulders.*

THREE GREY SISTERS, *sisters of the Gorgons.*

THREE HESPERIDÆ, *daughters of the Evening Star.*

ACT I.

A Room in the House of POLYDECTES.

POLYDECTES and SERVANTS.

Polydectes. Hear, slaves. I will

that ye go through the island and proclaim that I, Polydectes, King of Seriphos, will give this day a feast, here in my palace, and summon thereto all the chiefs and the elders and the young men of the island. For I would that all men should see my glory and be satisfied with my rule, when they see the banquet prepared for them.

1st Slave. We obey, lord, and go in haste to summon men to thy feast.

Polydectes (to another SLAVE). Go thou too—thou to the east, and he to the west, and these to the north and south, that none of those whose presence we desire may be left out. Hasten ye that the banquet be prepared, and all men assembled by noon.

2nd Slave. Doth my lord will that all the young men be bidden to the feast?

Polydectes. Yea, verily, for we desire greatly to see among the young men a trial of skill in such things as they excel in, whether in throwing the quoit, or the javelin, or whatsoever it may be.

1st Slave. Then must we also bid Perseus, the son of Zeus.

Polydectes. What sayest thou? Perseus, the son of Zeus?

2nd Slave. He meaneth Perseus, the young man that my lord's brother, Dictys, found upon the seashore, and took and brought up in his house. For this Perseus is more skilled than all the other young men of the island in those things whereof my lord speaketh.

Polydectes. Son of Zeus! the son of Danaë, my bondwoman, she that ever opposeth herself to my will! Slaves that ye are, to dare call this outcast the son of Zeus! But bid him come too. For when all the other young men bring gifts, as is fitting, then will Perseus have nothing to bring. So shall he be shamed before all men. Now he is proud and vaunteth himself, but anon he shall be brought low. Where is this Danaë? Why is she not grinding corn with the other women? Lo, she trusteth in this her son, who boasteth to be one of the immortals, but I know a way to humble her and him.

[Exit POLYDECTES.]

1st Slave. Now will he seek Danaë, and chide her, and she shall be punished for that thou didst speak of Perseus.

2nd Slave. I care not. I love Perseus and Danaë, and methinks the time will come that Perseus will overcome this wicked king, Polydectes, and rule in his stead.

1st Slave. Would he were our king to-day. But while Polydectes beareth rule, I think it prudent to speak after his manner, and to say such things as are pleasing to him.

Enter PERSEUS, running, and carrying a boar-spear, and other implements of chase.

Perseus (calling). Mother! mother!

1st Slave (mocking). Mother! mother!

Perseus (striking him). Why callest thou after me, Mother?

1st Slave (escaping and laughing).
Ha, ha!

Perseus. I have slain a boar, the largest that ever was seen; and I called for Danaë, my mother, that she might rejoice at my deed.

1st Slave. Danaë fetcheth water for the king!

Perseus. And how dares the king let my mother do this thing which is only fit for a slave woman.

2nd Slave. Knowest thou not, Perseus, that Polydectes hath taken Danaë to be his slave, because she would not wed with him?

Perseus. I have been beyond the sea, and knew nought of any of these things. If what thou sayest be true, I will seek this Polydectes and slay him, though I die for it.

1st Slave. Patience, Perseus. Thou canst not slay Polydectes, for all we his servants can protect him from thee. It is not with Danaë as this fellow saith. She hath come to the palace of the king of her own will, and in nought is she compelled of those things that she doth among the other women.

Perseus. Verily, it cannot be that Dictys, my foster-father, would suffer such a thing to be done unto her. But go now, seek her for me, that I may tell her of my hunting. For she loveth to hear tell of the slaughter, when all the danger is past. (*Yawns.*) Ah me! I would fain sleep, or fill myself with meat, for I have not tasted food these two days.

2nd Slave. Polydectes doth pro-

claim a great feast this day, and bids to it all the young men of the island.

1st Slave. He bade us invite thee too, Perseus, the son of his bond-woman, Danaë!

Perseus (striking at him). If thou sayest such a word again, I will cut thy tongue from thy mouth.

2nd Slave. Heed him not, Perseus. We will seek Danaë, and tell her thou hast returned.

[*Exit SLAVES.* PERSEUS, as though utterly overcome with fatigue, drops to the floor upon a heap of skins and sleeps.

Enter ATHENE.

Athene. Perseus!

[*PERSEUS turns in his sleep towards* ATHENE, *but still keeps his eyes shut, and speaks as if in sleep.*

Athene. Perseus!

Perseus. Who art thou, lady, and how dost thou know my name?

Athene. I am Pallas Athene; and I know the thoughts of all men's hearts, and discern their manhood or their baseness, and whether they be of clay or of fire. And from the souls of clay I turn away, and they are blest, but not by me. They fatten at ease, like sheep in the pasture, and eat what they did not sow, like oxen in the stall. And when death gathers them, they go down unloved into Hell, and their name vanishes out of the land.

Perseus (turning over, and lying on his back, looking up at ATHENE, *but still with eyes shut).* Better to die in the flower of youth, with the

chance of winning a noble name, than to live at ease like the sheep, and die unloved and unrenowned.

Athene. Hear, then, of the souls of fire! To them I give more fire, and to those who are manful I give a might more than man's. These are the heroes, the sons of the Immortals, who are blest, but not like the souls of clay. For I drive them forth by strange paths, that they may fight the Titans and the monsters, the enemies of gods and men. And some of them are slain in the flower of youth, no man knows when or where; and some of them win noble names, and a fair and green old age; but what will be their latter end I know not, and none knows, save Zeus, the father of gods and men. Tell me now, Perseus, which of these two sorts of men seem to you more blest?

Perseus. Would I might be a soul of fire, lady!

Athene (holding her shield towards him). Look in this mirror, Perseus, and tell me what thou seest?

Perseus (starting up towards the shield, and speaking excitedly, but still with shut eyes). I see the face of a woman, beautiful, but pale as death. And her brows are knit with everlasting pain, and her lips are thin and bitter like a snake's; and instead of hair, vipers are wreathed about her temples, and shoot out forked tongues; and round her head are folded wings like an eagle's, and upon her bosom, claws of brass.

Athene. Darest thou, Perseus, face

such a monster, and slay it, that I may place its head upon this shield?

Perseus (stretching out his arms). If there is anything so fierce and foul on earth, it were a noble deed to kill it. Where can I find the monster? Who is she?

Athene. This is Medusa the Gorgon, the mother of a monstrous brood. It may be thou shalt seek for her. But now thou hast work to do at home. First play the man in that, and then I can think thee worthy to go in search of the Gorgon.

Perseus (beginning to cry out). Lady——

[*ATHENE goes out, and PERSEUS sinks back in sleep.*]

DANAË comes in with a hand-mill, and sits beside him on the floor, weeping. PERSEUS, after moving about restlessly, starts up suddenly, awake, crying.

Perseus. Medusa!

Danaë (turning to him). My son!

Perseus. Mother! What dost thou here? Where is the Great Lady?

Danaë. What lady, my son?

Perseus. She who spake to me even now.

Danaë. No lady has been here.

Perseus (rubbing his eyes). It was a dream, and yet it was a true thing. But what dost thou here, mother? and—thou art weeping! And—chains on thy hands. (*Starting up and raising DANAË.*) What does this mean?

Danaë (clinging to him). Alas, my son!

POLYDECTES *enters in anger and haste.*

Polydectes. Ha, woman, I have found thee.

[*Is about to seize DANAË, when PERSEUS flies at him and takes him by the throat.*

Perseus. Villain and tyrant! Is it thus thou respectest the gods, and showest mercy to strangers and widows? Thou shalt die.

[*He takes the mill, and is about to dash it at POLYDECTES' head.*

Danaë. Ah, my son, we are strangers and helpless in the land; and if thou killest the king all the people will fall upon us, and we shall both die.

Polydectes (threateningly to DANAË). Go to the women's quarters, and work there with them.

Perseus. Kill me first. Mother, stay! Better we should both die than thou be bond to this tyrant.

Enter DICTYS.

Danaë (to DICTYS). Save him, father! save my son!

Perseus (still keeping hold of POLYDECTES). He shall die.

[*Tries to force him down.*

Dictys. Stay, Perseus. Remember that he is my brother. Remember how I have brought you up, and trained you as my own son, and spare him for my sake. And thou, brother—(to POLYDECTES)—be not wroth with the woman, but let me take her again to my home.

Polydectes. I meant her no harm. The young man was hasty, as are

the young ever. Come, Perseus, I would have guarded her, and made her my wife, and kept her free from all danger. But have thy way. She shall go with thee, or with Dictys, my brother, if ye will.

Perseus (reflecting). Neither with me, nor with father Dictys, methinks, can she be in safety. But I will take her to the Temple of Athene, and give her in charge to the priestess. Impious must be the man who should dare to drag her from the altar of the Goddess.

[PERSEUS, DANAË, and DICTYS go out.

Polydectes (shaking with rage). Ah, thou son of a slave! Thou shalt die the death. (*Enter SLAVES.*) Have ye prepared the feast?

1st Slave. Yea, my lord. The beasts are slain, and the guests are coming to the palace, and each man bringeth with him some goodly gift.

Polydectes. What is the manner of the gifts? and what good things do the chiefs present to me?

1st Slave. O king, one bringeth a horse, and another a precious jewel, and another hath a sword of goodly workmanship. But some bring only petty gifts—a basket of grapes, or a hare caught in the chase.

PERSEUS *enters, walking thoughtfully, as though considering something deeply, and stands in the doorway.*

Polydectes (pointing to PERSEUS). And what has that foundling brought?

2nd Slave. O king, the young man is poor, and hath nothing of his own. Therefore it must needs be that he cometh before thee empty-handed.

Polydectes. Fetch him hither before me.

2nd Slave. Perseus, the king desireth to speak to thee.

[PERSEUS advances towards
POLYDECTES.

Polydectes. Am I not your king, Perseus, and have I not invited you to my feast? Where is your present then?

Perseus (stammering). My present? I—I——

Polydectes. This fellow was thrown ashore here like a piece of drift-wood, or weed, and yet he is too proud to bring a gift to me, the king.

1st Slave. And though he does not know who his father is, he is vain enough to let the old women call him the son of Zeus!

Polydectes. Son of Zeus, where is thy godlike gift?

1st Slave. Thou canst not come to the banquet of the king, unless thou bring a present with thee.

Polydectes (turning as if to go). Ha, Perseus, look to it, lest you go hungry this day. For now I go to greet my guests, who are come to meet me, as is the custom, bringing each his present with him. And I would not that you should be shamed before the chiefs of the island, for it is told me that you boast yourself much of your deeds of wrestling, boxing, and hunting,

and I hoped to behold you honoured for your strength.

Perseus. A present! A present! See if I do not bring a nobler one than all of theirs together.

Polydectes (laughing). Hear him! Hear the boaster! What is your present to be?

Perseus (with sudden resolution). The head of the Gorgon!

Polydectes (half turning as he reaches the door). You have promised to bring me the Gorgon's head? Then never appear in this island again without it! Such is the decree of Polydectes, your king! Now go!

[*Exeunt* POLYDECTES and
SLAVES.

Perseus (grinding his teeth). Fool and boaster that I am! (*Stretching out his arms to the sky.*) Pallas Athene, was my dream true? and shall I slay the Gorgon? If thou didst really show me her face, let me not come to shame as a liar and boastful. Rashly and angrily I promised; but cunningly and patiently will I perform.

[*He pauses, and looks out at the back of the stage.*

Perseus. Hear me, Athene! Rashly and angrily I promised; but cunningly and patiently will I perform.

[*Another pause.*

Perseus (kneeling and supplicating). Hear me, O hear, Pallas Athene! Rashly and angrily I promised; but cunningly and patiently will I perform.

[*He kneels, bowing his head, with his back to the audience.*

Enter ATHENE *and* HERMES.
 PERSEUS, *raising his head, sees them, and falls prostrate, worshipping.*

Athene. Perseus, he who overcomes in one trial merits thereby a sharper trial still. You have braved Polydectes and done manfully. Dare you brave Medusa the Gorgon?

Perseus. Try me; for since you spoke to me in my dream a new soul has come into my breast, and I should be ashamed not to dare anything which I can do. Show me, then, how I can do this!

Athene. Perseus, think well before you attempt; for this deed requires a seven years' journey, in which you cannot turn back nor escape; but if your heart fails you, you must die in the Unshapen Land, where no man will ever find your bones.

Perseus. Better so than live here, useless and despised. Tell me then, oh, tell me, fair and wise goddess, of your great kindness and condescension, how I can but do this one thing, and then, if need be, die?

Athene. Be patient then, and listen; for if you forget my words, you will indeed die. You must go northward to the country of the Hyperboreans, who live beyond the pole, at the sources of the cold north wind, till you find the three Grey Sisters, who have but one eye and one tooth between them. You must ask them the way to the Nymphs, the daughters of the Even-

ing Star, who dance about the Golden Tree, in the Atlantic Island of the West. They will tell you the way to the Gorgon, that you may slay her, my enemy, the mother of monstrous beasts. She is the sister of the Gorgons, Stheino and Euryte the abhorred, the daughters of the Queen of the Sea. Touch them not, for they are immortal; but bring me only the head of Medusa, whose eyes are so terrible that who-soever looks on them is turned to stone.

Perseus. I will bring it! but how am I to escape her eyes? Will she not freeze me too into stone?

Athene. You shall take this polished shield, and when you come near, look not at her, but at her image in the brass. So shall you strike her safely. And when you have struck off her head, wrap it, with your face turned away, in the folds of the goatskin on which the shield hangs, the hide of Amaltheïé, the nurse of the Ægis-holder. So you will bring it safely back to me, and win to yourself renown and a place among the heroes who feast with the Immortals upon the peak where no winds blow.

Perseus. I will go, though I die in going. But how shall I cross the seas without a ship, and who will show me my way? And when I find her, how shall I slay her, if her scales be iron and brass?

Hermes. These sandals of mine—*(he takes off his winged sandals)*—will bear you across the seas, and over hill and dale like a bird, as they

bear me all day long. For I am Hermes, the far-famed Argus-slayer, the messenger of the Immortals who dwell on Olympus. (PERSEUS *prostrates himself before* HERMES.) The sandals themselves will guide you on the road, for they are divine and cannot stray; and this sword itself, the Argus-slayer, will kill her, for it is divine, and needs no second stroke. Arise, gird them on, and go forth.

[PERSEUS *arises, and takes the sandals and sword.*

Athene. Now go forth to the sea-shore, leap from the cliff, and begone.

Perseus. May I not bid farewell to my mother, and to Dictys, my foster-father? And may I not offer burnt-offerings to you, and to Hermes, the far-famed Argus-slayer, and to Father Zeus above?

Athene. You shall not bid farewell to your mother, lest your heart relent at her weeping. I will comfort her and Dictys until you return in peace. Nor shall you offer burnt-offerings to the Olympians; for your offering shall be Medusa's head. Now go forth, leap, and trust to the armour of the Immortals.

[PERSEUS *bows himself before* ATHENE and HERMES, *who go out.* After a pause he rises, and girds on the sword and sandals, and stands holding his sword aloft, and stretching out one sandalled foot, while the curtain falls.

ACT II.

(*A Slip-scene.*) *The Unshapen Land.*

As the scene opens the cracked voices of the SISTERS are heard, chanting a song of which at first only a wail is audible, and afterwards, as PERSEUS finishes his speech, the sound turns to words.

Enter PERSEUS wearing the winged sandals, bearing the sword of HERMES and the shield of ATHENE.

Perseus. Lo, I have passed through Cythnus and by Ceos, and the pleasant Cyclades. And I came to Attica, and passed through Athens and Thebes, and the Copaic Lake. And up the vale of Cephissus I went, and over the peaks of Cæta and Pindus, and the rich Thesalian plains. And still my sandals bore me on, over the Thracian mountains and through many a barbarous tribe, the Pæons and Dardans and Triballi, till I came to the great stream of the Ister and the dreary Scythian plains. Yet the sandals led me ever onwards day and night, towards the bleak north-west, and I passed over Ister dryshod, and away through moor and fen, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left. And now, methinks, I am come to the Unshapen Land and the place which has no name. And seven days have I walked here seeking the home of the three Grey Sisters. Surely now I must be near at hand, for I seem to be on the edge of the

everlasting night, and the soil is hard with ice, even as Athene told me.

[He stops and listens, hearing the crooning from the cave.]

Perseus. What sound is that? It is as though waves were breaking on distant shores. *(The voices become louder, and the words are heard:—*“The old times were better than the new! The old times were better than the new! The old times were better than the new!”*)*

Perseus. Surely these must be the voices of the three Grey Sisters, and now shall I learn from them the way to the Gorgons.

One by one the GREY SISTERS totter out. They walk hobbling, and gathering around them ragged grey draperies, which partly form a veil over their heads. The first one holds in her hand the eye, and the second holds the tooth.

3rd Sister (behind the others). Give me the eye, Sister! Sister, give me the eye!

1st Sister. Give me the tooth, Sister! Sister, give me the tooth! I am hungry; I would eat. Give me the tooth!

2nd Sister. I am cold! I am cold!

Perseus (to himself, pityingly). Alas! the poor old women! *(To the SISTERS.)* Oh, venerable mothers, wisdom is the daughter of old age. You therefore should know many

things. Tell me, if you can, the path to the Gorgon.

1st Sister. Who is this who reproaches us with old age?

2nd Sister. This is the voice of one of the children of men.

Perseus. I do not reproach, but I honour your old age, and I am one of the sons of men and of the heroes. The rulers of Olympus have sent me to ask the way to the Gorgon.

1st Sister. There are new rulers in Olympus, and all new things are bad.

2nd Sister. We hate your rulers and the heroes, and all the children of men. We are the kindred of the Titans, and the Giants and the Gorgons, and the ancient monsters of the deep.

3rd Sister. Who is this rash and insolent man who pushes unbidden into our world?

1st Sister. There never was such a world as ours, and never will be; if we let him see it, he will spoil it all.

2nd Sister. Give me the eye, that I may see him.

3rd Sister. Give me the tooth, that I may bite him.

[They grope about among themselves and struggle feebly to get the eye from each other.]

Perseus (to himself). Hungry men must needs be hasty; if I stay making many words here, I shall be starved.

[He gets near to them quietly, and as they pass the eye

from one to another, he holds out his hand, and the first SISTER puts it into his palm.

Perseus (springing back). Cruel and proud old women, I have your eye; and I will throw it into the sea unless you tell me the path to the Gorgon, and swear to me that you tell me right.

Three Sisters (speaking one after the other, confusedly). Woe, woe, alas! alas! He has the eye! Sister, you gave it him—not I! not I!—Give us back the eye! Give it back, or we will tear you and bite you.

Perseus. Poor old mother, you cannot hurt me! Had you answered courteously at the first, it had been better for you; but now I can force you to tell me the truth! Say then, quickly, which way must I go?

Sisters (speaking sleepily, one after the other). You must go, foolish boy, to the southward, to the ugly glare of the sun [Shivering.

2nd Sister. Till you come to Atlas the Giant, who holds the heaven and the earth apart. And you must ask his daughters, the Hesperides, who are young and foolish like yourself.

3rd Sister. And now, give us back our eye, for we have forgotten the rest.

Perseus. Take it, then, and I will hasten away southward.

[*The SISTERS take the eye and totter back into the cave. The slip-curtain drops, and rises upon—*

SCENE II.—*The Garden of the HESPERIDES.*

To the right, the Tree with Golden Fruit, and a serpent coiled under it. Three NYMPHS are dancing hand in hand round the tree, and singing.

Enter PERSEUS from the back, as if guided by the singing. He looks round to see where the song comes from, and suddenly catches sight of the NYMPHS and stands still, drawing backward a pace.

1st Nymph. Who are you, stranger? Are you Heracles the mighty, who will come to rob our garden and carry off our Golden Fruit?

Perseus. I am not Heracles the mighty, and I want none of your Golden Fruit. Tell me, fair Nymphs, the way which leads to the Gorgon, that I may go on my way and slay her.

1st Nymph (advancing, with hands outstretched, offering to dance). Not yet, not yet, fair boy! Come dance with us for a while around the tree in the garden which knows no winter, the home of the south wind and the sun. Come hither and play with us awhile; we have danced alone here for a thousand years, and our hearts are weary with longing for a playfellow. So come, come, come!

Perseus. I cannot dance with you, fair maidens; for I must do the errand of the Immortals. So tell me the way to the Gorgon, lest I wander and perish in the waves.

1st Nymph. Alas! the Gorgon. She will freeze you into stone.

Perseus. It is better to die like a hero than to live like an ox in the stall. The Immortals have lent me weapons, and they will give me wit to use them.

1st Nymph. Fair boy, if you are bent upon your own ruin, be it so. We know not the way to the Gorgon; but we will ask the Giant Atlas, above upon the mountain peak, the brother of our Father, the silver Evening Star. He sits aloft and sees across the Ocean, and far away into the Unshapen Land.

[They all go towards the left and look up.]

1st Nymph. O mighty Atlas, who canst see across the Ocean, tell this stranger whether thou seest anywhere the Gorgons, hated of gods and men. For the youth would slay Medusa, and we cannot persuade him to stay and rest with us, lest he be slain himself in his quest.

Atlas (speaking from behind). I can see the Gorgons lying on an island far away, but this youth can never come near them unless he has the hat of darkness, which whosoever wears cannot be seen.

Perseus. Where is that hat, that I may find it?

Atlas. No living mortal can find that hat, for it lies in the depths of Hades, in the regions of the dead. But the Nymphs, the daughters of my brother, are immortal, and they shall fetch it for you, if you will promise me one thing, and keep your faith.

Perseus. If I can have the cap of darkness, I will grant you any request you will.

Atlas. When you come back with the head of Medusa, you shall show me the beautiful horror, that I may lose my feeling and my breathing, and become a stone for ever; for it is weary labour for me to hold the heavens and the earth apart.

Perseus. I promise that I will do this for you, Atlas.

1st Nymph. And I will descend into Hades and fetch for you the magic hat.

[First NYMPH goes out, R. The other NYMPHS lead PERSEUS to sit by the tree.]

2nd Nymph. Tell us, Perseus, whence you came, and how you found your way to our Golden Tree and garden?

Perseus. I came from the home of the three Grey Sisters, on the borders of the Unshapen Land. And they bade me find my way to Atlas, but they could not tell me the road. But my sandals that Hermes gave me bore me ever to the southward.

3rd Nymph. Say then, Perseus, by what road did you come?

Perseus. I passed the isle of the Hyperboreans, and the tin isles, and the long Iberian shore, and every day the sun rose higher upon the bright blue sea. And the terns and the sea-gulls swept round my head, and called to me to stop and play, and the dolphins gambolled up as I passed and offered to carry me on their backs. But I passed on, and day by day the sun rose higher,

and leaped more swiftly into the sea at night, and more swiftly out of the sea at dawn; but I skimmed over the billows like a sea-gull, and my feet were never wet, because of these my magic sandals. And at last I saw far away a mighty mountain, all rose-red in the setting sun. Its feet were wrapped in forests, and its head in wreaths of cloud, and I knew that it was Atlas, who holds the heavens and the earth apart.

2nd Nymph. And now, if thou shouldst find the Gorgon, and slay her, what wilt thou do? Wilt thou return and stay with us, and dance around our tree?

Perseus. Nay, for I must first return to Seriphos, and take vengeance upon the king Polydectes, who holdeth my mother enslaved.

3rd Nymph. And then, Perseus—and then?

Perseus. Nay, I know not. It may be the goddess will yet have work for me to do.

Enter 1ST NYMPH, with the magic hat.

1st Nymph. See, Perseus, I have been down into Hades, into the dark land, and now my eyes are dazzled with the brightness; but I have brought for you the magic hat.

2nd Nymph. Ah, Perseus, go not. Stay awhile with us.

3rd Nymph. Yes, Perseus, stay and dance.

Perseus. Ah, fair Nymphs, there is no dancing in my heart till my work be done. And now, farewell. It may be I will come again.

Nymphs (singing). Farewell! Farewell! Farewell!

[Exit PERSEUS. Curtain falls, and rises again after a short pause upon the same scene. The NYMPHS are lying stretched upon the ground.]

2nd Nymph. It is long since Perseus went away.

3rd Nymph. Let us ask father Atlas. Perhaps he has seen something.

[They all rise and go towards ATLAS.]

1st Nymph. Father Atlas, who seest all things from thy mountain-top, dost thou see the Gorgons?

Atlas (speaking from behind). Yes, I beheld the Gorgons, and how they lay in sleep.

2nd Nymph. And Perseus, our playfellow. Did you see him?

Atlas. I could not see Perseus, for he wore the magic hat. But I saw how Medusa turned in her sleep, and tossed to and fro. And from among her tresses the vipers' heads awoke, and peeped up with their bright dry eyes, and showed their fangs and hissed. And Medusa, as she tossed, threw back her wings and showed her brazen claws.

3rd Nymph. And—didst thou see further?

Atlas. I saw a bright flash as if a sword descended, and then I saw the body of Medusa fall back, headless.

Nymphs. The Gorgon is slain! The Gorgon is slain!

Atlas. And now the two sisters of Medusa have risen and found her

dead, and they spring yelling into the air, seeking for him who has done the deed. I hear their cries even from afar.

2nd Nymph. But is Perseus safe?

Atlas. I cannot see him, and neither can they, for he wears the magic hat. But they smell the blood, and follow in his track.

Nymphs. Alas! alas!

Atlas. Now they rush onward, but ever more slowly. And now they go back; for Perseus with his swift sandals must have gone faster than they, and they have given up the chase.

[The voice of PERSEUS is heard without, to the right.]

Perseus (without). Bear me well, now, brave sandals, for the hounds of death are at my heels.

Nymphs (taking each other's hands and dancing). Perseus is coming! Perseus is coming!

Enter PERSEUS, with the magic hat in his hand, and something wrapped under his cloak.

Atlas. Is it you, Perseus? And have you slain the Gorgon?

Perseus. Yes, I have slain the Gorgon, and I have her head wrapped here under my cloak.

Atlas. Fulfil your promise to me, and let me see the head of Medusa.

Perseus. Turn away then, fair maidens, lest ye also become stone, while I uncover the monster, and give Atlas release from his labour.

[The NYMPHS hide their heads while the cloud is drawn aside from ATLAS, whose

head and upstretched arms are shown. PERSEUS steps forward, with his back to the audience, and holds out the goatskin cloak, uncovering it towards ATLAS. He turns his own head away. The cloud is lowered and raised again immediately, and it is seen that ATLAS is turned to stone.]

Perseus (covering the head, and turning to the NYMPHS). And now, fair maidens, I thank you, and you chiefly, lady. *(To 1ST NYMPH.)* For now I know I have a deadly weapon, and with this I can smite and slay all my enemies. Thus will I do to Polydectes, when I come again to Seriphos.

1st Nymph. Atlas!

2nd Nymph. Atlas!

3rd Nymph. Atlas!

1st Nymph. He cannot hear us, for he is turned to stone, and will sleep for ever above the clouds. So shall the heavens and earth remain apart, but Atlas has rest from his toil.

Perseus. Tell me, fair Nymphs, by what road shall I go homeward again, for I wandered far round in coming hither?

Nymphs. Go home no more, but stay and play with us, the lonely maidens, who dwell for ever far away from gods and men.

Perseus. Nay, I must be gone, for my soul thirsts to have vengeance upon Polydectes, who mocked me that I brought no gift. Now shall I be the mocker, when he sees the

* gift that I have brought. So tell me the way to Seriphos.

1st Nymph (offering Golden Fruit). Take with you, then, this magic fruit, which if you eat once you will not hunger for seven days. For you must go eastward and eastward ever, over the doleful Lybian shore, which Poseidon gave to Father Zeus when he burst open the Bosphorus and the Hellespont and drowned the fair Lectonian land. And Zeus took that land in exchange, a fair bargain, much bad ground for a little good, and to this day it lies waste and desert, with shingle and rock and sand.

Percus. Farewell, then, once more, kind Nymphs. And think me not discourteous that I stay not with you. For he whom Athene commands must not linger on his way.

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A slip-scene, representing Libya. PERSEUS lying on the ground, as though exhausted.*

Percus. Alas! the sandals of Hermes have failed me. Seven days and nights have I striven against the storm, and seven days have I been driven back. And now the fruit the Nymphs gave me is no more availing, and I am spent with hunger and thirst. Methought I saw yonder a fair lake, but when I came to it, it vanished at my feet, and there was nought but burning sand. (*Kneeling with uplifted hands.*)

O Athene, fair and pure, if thou hearest me, wilt thou leave me here to die of drought? I have brought thee the Gorgon's head at thy bidding, and hitherto thou hast prospered my journey; dost thou desert me at the last? Else why will not these immortal sandals prevail, even against the desert storms? Shall I never see my mother more, and the blue ripple round Seriphos, and the sunny hills of Hellas?

[He pauses, and remains kneeling for a short time; then rises slowly, and looks around.]

Percus. Surely I am not here without the will of the Immortals, for Athene will not lie. Were not these sandals to lead me in the right road? Then the road in which I have tried to go must be a wrong road. Surely Athene hath sent me hither, and will not have me go homeward yet. What if there be another noble deed to be done before I see the sunny hills of Hellas? And now, methinks, I hear sounds as of men labouring at their work. Surely I am near some city of men, and I knew it not.

Enter two Egyptian GIRLS.

1st Egyptian (she is bearing food and wine in a basket). See yonder, a stranger!

2nd Egyptian. Let us ask him whence he comes?

1st Egyptian. Nay, I fear me, for he is not as one of us.

2nd Egyptian. Let me speak then. (*To PERSEUS.*) Who art thou, fair youth? and what bearest thou

beneath thy goatskin there? Surely thou art one of the Immortals; for thy skin is white like ivory, and ours is red like clay. Thy hair is like threads of gold, and ours is black and curled. Surely thou art one of the Immortals.

[They kneel before him, prostrating themselves.]

Perseus. Nay, maidens, I am not one of the Immortals; but I am a hero of the Hellenes. And I have slain the Gorgon in the wilderness, and bear her head with me. Give me food, therefore, I pray ye, that I may go forward and finish my work.

1st Egyptian. Take then and eat, fair youth. *(Offering him food.)* But if thou hast slain the Gorgon, let us go back to the city and tell the news to the priests. Surely they will come forth, to bring you unto the temple and to the king, and he will do thee honour as is fitting.

Perseus. Nay, let me go, maidens. For Athene yet hath work for me to do.

1st Egyptian. Stay yet awhile, till we return from the city.

[The Egyptian GIRLS go out.]

Perseus. Now, if I stay here, this people will worship me, and make of me a god. I must flee, therefore, before the news be known of the slaying of the Gorgon.

[He rises, and goes towards the left, and as he comes to the entrance, puts on his magic hat. The Egyptian GIRLS return from the right with a PRIEST.]

2nd Egyptian. Lo, father, here is the youth we told thee of.

Priest. Where?

1st Egyptian. He was here even now. But now I see him not. *(They look out towards the left.)* Surely he has vanished out of our sight.

2nd Egyptian. See where he left the food that we gave him.

Priest. Surely this was one of the Immortals. And his coming is a sign of blessing. We will cause a statue to be made of him, even as ye described him to me, and we will set it up in Chemis, and worship it.

1st Egyptian. Alas! that we shall see the fair youth no more.

Priest. Perchance, if we pay him worship and due honour, he will appear again unto us, and then will the season be fruitful and Father Nile will rise high that year.

[Curtain falls, and rises again upon]

SCENE II.—*The Shore of Palestine.*

ANDROMEDA is seen, bound to the rock.

Enter PERSEUS, with the magic cap on his head.

Perseus. Lo, upon the water's edge, what white image do I see? This must surely be the statue of some sea-god. I will go near and see what kind of god these barbarians worship.

[He approaches ANDROMEDA.]

Andromeda. Ah! mother! mother! wherefore didst thou boast of me? Woe is me, woe!

Perseus. I have never seen so beautiful a maiden; no, not in all

our isles. Surely she is a king's daughter. Do barbarians treat their king's daughters thus? She is too fair, at least, to have done any wrong. I will speak to her.

Andromeda (not seeing PERSEUS). Mother! mother!

[PERSEUS takes off his magic hat, and ANDROMEDA suddenly sees him. She shrieks.

Andromeda. Woe, woe, alas!

Perseus. Do not fear me, fair one. I am a Hellene, and no barbarian. What cruel men have bound you? But first I will set you free.

[He pulls at her chains with his hands.

Andromeda. Touch me not; I am accursed, devoted as a victim to the sea-gods. They will slay you if you dare to set me free.

Perseus. Let them try!

[He cuts the fetters with his sword; ANDROMEDA sinks down upon the earth and hides her face with her hands.

Perseus. Now you belong to me, and not to these sea-gods, whosoever they may be!

Andromeda (weeping). Mother! mother! mother!

Perseus. Why call on your mother? She can be no mother to have left you here. If a bird is dropped out of the nest, it belongs to the man who picks it up. If a jewel is cast by the wayside, it is his who dare win and wear it, as I will win you, and will wear you. I know now why Pallas Athene sent me hither. She sent me to gain a prize worth all my toil and more. *(He raises her*

up, and takes her hand.) Where are these sea-gods, cruel and unjust, who doom fair maids to death? I carry the weapons of the Immortals. Let them measure their strength against mine! But tell me, fair maiden, who you are, and what dark fate brought you here?

Andromeda. I am the daughter of Cepheus, King of Iopa, and my mother is Cassiopeia of the beautiful tresses, and they called me Andromeda, as long as life was mine. And I stand here, hapless that I am, for the sea-monster's food, to atone for my mother's sin. For she boasted of me once that I was fairer than Atergatis, Queen of the Fishes; so she in her wrath sent the floods, and her brother the Fire-king sent the earthquakes and wasted all the land, and after the floods a monster bred of the slime, who devours all living things. And now he must devour me, guiltless though I am—me who never harmed a living thing, nor saw a fish upon the shore but I gave it life and threw it back into the sea; for in our land we eat no fish, for fear of Atergatis, their queen. Yet the priests say that nothing but my blood can atone for a sin that I never committed.

Perseus. A sea-monster? I have fought with worse than him. I would have faced Immortals for your sake; how much more a beast of the sea!

Andromeda (clinging to him). Why will you die, young as you are? Is there not death and sorrow enough in the world already? It is noble

for me to die, that I may save the lives of a whole people; but you, better than them all, why should I slay you too? Go you your way; I must go mine.

Perseus. Not so; for the Lords of Olympus, whom I serve, are the friends of the heroes, and help them on to noble deeds. Led by them, I slew the Gorgon, the beautiful horror; and not without them do I come hither to slay this monster, with that same Gorgon's head. Yet hide your eyes when I leave you, lest the sight of it freeze you too to stone.

Andromeda (pointing to the sea). There he comes, with the sunrise, as they promised. I must die now. How shall I endure it? Oh, go! Is it not dreadful enough to be torn piecemeal, without having you to look on?

[*She tries to thrust him away.*]

Perseus. I go; yet promise me one thing ere I go: that if I slay this beast you will be my wife, and come back with me to my kingdom in fruitful Argos, for I am a king's heir. Promise me, and seal it with a kiss.

[*ANDROMEDA kisses PERSEUS, who leaves her crouching under the rock, and goes out, L.*]

Perseus (coming back, and lifting up ANDROMEDA). Now, Andromeda, lift up your head and look out seawards, and tell me what you see.

Andromeda (lifting up her head, but remaining in a crouching position).

I see a long black rock, where even now I saw the monster.

Perseus. This again is the work of the Gorgon's head. The monster who was to slay you is turned to stone. And now rejoice with me, and with the city, for look where come the elders of your people.

Enter, R., CEPHEUS and CASSIOPEIA, and PHINEUS and his SON, with PRIEST and ATTENDANTS, some of whom play harps and cymbals.

Andromeda (leading PERSEUS to her parents). See, my father, the hero who hath slain the monster, and saved me, thy daughter, alive.

Cassiopeia. Ah, my daughter, your father and I sat upon the ground, in sackcloth and ashes, lamenting thy fate. But they who stood on the cliff, watching what should befall, came hastily and told us this wonder. And now the sin that I sinned is atoned for, and thou art given to me again, my beloved one." [*She embraces ANDROMEDA.*]

Cepheus (to PERSEUS). Hero of the Hellenes, stay here with me and be my son-in-law, and I will give you the half of my kingdom.

Perseus. I will be your son-in-law, but of your kingdom I will have none, for I long after the pleasant land of Greece, and my mother who waits for me at home.

Cepheus. You must not take my daughter away at once, for she is to us like one alive from the dead. Stay with us here a year, and after that you shall return with honour.

Perseus. That will I do, but now let us build here upon the spot three altars of stone and wood—one to Athene, and one to Hermes, who helped me in my quest, and a third to Father Zeus.

Cepheus. Whatsoever thou sayest shall be done, my son. (*To ATTENDANTS.*) Go bring hither the wood and the fire for the altar, and bullocks and rams for the sacrifice.

1st Attendant (to 2nd). This Perseus is a pious man, and worthy to be the husband of our princess.

Priest. Yet I fear the Sea Queen will be even more fierce against us, because her monster is slain.

2nd Attendant. See how Phineus chafes inwardly and rages in his mind, for Andromeda should have wedded his son.

Phineus (coming forward with his son; to CEPHEUS). You shall not marry your daughter to this stranger, of whom no one knows even the name. Was not Andromeda betrothed to my son? And now she is safe again, behold he claims her for his.

Perseus. If your son is in want of a bride, let him save a maiden for himself. As yet he seems but a helpless bridegroom. He left this one to die, and dead she is to him. I saved her alive, and alive she is to me, but to no one else. Ungrateful man! have I not saved your land and the lives of your sons and daughters, and will you requite me thus? Go, or it will be the worse for you.

Phineus. Draw your sword, my son, and let us kill this man.

[PHINEUS and his SON rush upon PERSEUS, but he unveils the GORGON'S head, and says.

Perseus. This has delivered my bride from one wild beast; it shall deliver her from these also.

[PHINEUS and his SON are turned stiff as stone, still with uplifted swords.

The curtain falls, and presently rises again upon the same scene, and PERSEUS is seen alone, kneeling before the goddess ATHENE, and offering her the goatskin, with the GORGON'S head beneath it.

Athene. Perseus, you have played the man, and see, you have your reward. Know now that the gods are just, and help him who helps himself. Now give me here Herpe the sword, and the sandals, and the hat of darkness, that I may give them back to their owners; but the Gorgon's head you shall keep awhile, that you may overcome Polydectes when you return to your own land of Seriphos. Then shall you lay it up in my temple, that I may wear it on my shield for ever, a terror to the Titans and the monsters, and the foes of gods and men. And as for this land, I have appeased the sea and the fire, and there shall be no more floods and earthquakes. But let the people build altars to Father Zeus and to me, and worship the Immortals, the lords of heaven and earth.

CURTAIN.

“IN BELLS AND MOTLEY”
OR, THE MAY QUEEN
A PLAY IN ONE ACT

BY RITA STRAUSS. LYRICS BY ROLAND CARSE

IN the production of this play there is ample scope for the exercise of artistic taste. The back-cloth must be painted to represent a village green, similar to

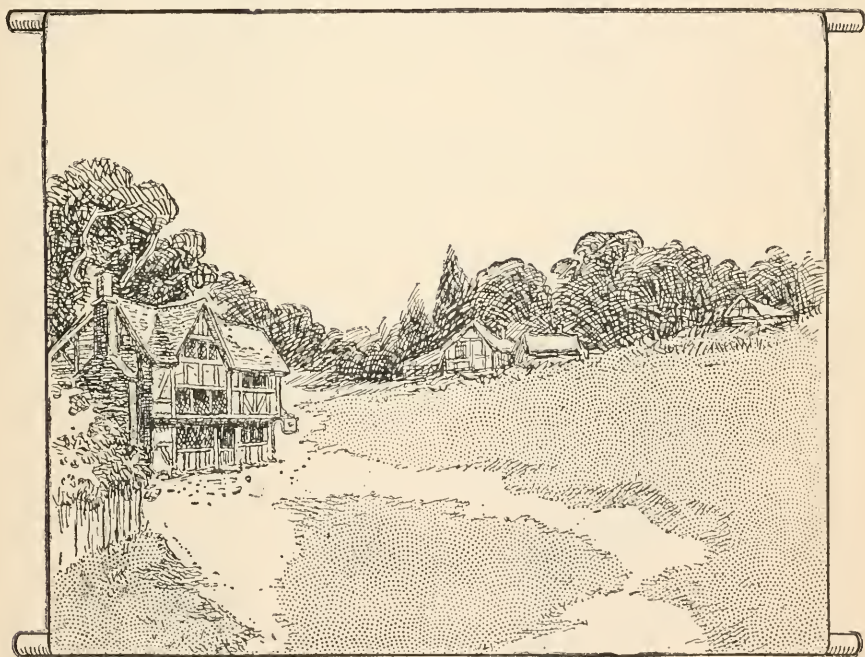


FIG. 1

that illustrated in Fig. 1. In the centre is a Maypole, which can be made according to the instructions given in “Thickhead,” whilst the wings should represent cottages, or trees. Almost any piece of rural scenery will serve for the setting of this play, but care must be exercised in the selection of the costumes, as much of its beauty lies in the pretty dresses of the actors.



FIG. 2



FIG. 3



FIG. 4



FIG. 5

COSTUMES

The Princess of Arcadia, who appears in a disguise of motley, should be dressed in a manner to match her companion, the Jester, whose costume is described below. A short parti-coloured skirt and bodice, with stockings to match, will suit the character she has assumed.

Crimp, the Jester.—An idea of the Jester's costume is given in Fig. 2, which shows how the motley may be worn. His cape and hood are made in one piece, the hood having large ears, stuffed with wadding to make them project, as shown in the figure. The short tunic is hung with small bells, and is bound round the waist with a large belt, from which a bag, also adorned with bells, is hung. The Jester should wear motley tights and sharply pointed shoes, and must carry a wand, with a bladder attached, in his hand.

The Lord Chamberlain.—The official costume, shown in Fig. 3, is somewhat elaborate in design. Beneath his fur-edged cloak he wears an embroidered tunic and trunks, the former being ornamented with gold chains and other insignia of office. Upon his legs are dark hose, whilst the shoes are adorned with large rosettes. The ruff round his neck should be made of fine material, and starched to make it retain its shape. The Chamberlain can carry a large rod in his hand to betoken his office.

The type of ornamental costume shown in Fig. 4 will prove very suitable for the courtiers. The tunic and trunks are made of rich brocade, different colours being used to distinguish the various individuals. The hose may be of any colour to suit the costume. A short cloak, trimmed with gold lace, hangs from the shoulders to the waist, and is adorned with a handsome chain, as shown in the illustration.

A simple village lad is illustrated in Fig. 5, his costume consisting of a plain jerkin, trunks, and hose, with a small flat cap upon the head. Minor differences of colour and ornamentation may be introduced wherever desired, such things as the puffed shoulder-pieces and ruffs being to a large extent optional.

"IN BELLS AND MOTLEY"

OR, THE MAY QUEEN

SCENE.—*A Village in Arcadia.*

TIME.—*The Sixteenth Century. May Day.*

CHARACTERS.

THE PRINCESS OF ARCADIA.

CRIMP, *her Jester.*

GAFFER BROWN, *an Old Villager.*

OLD VILLAGER, *Master of the May Day Ceremonies.*

THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN.

CLAIMANTS TO THE MAY THRONE.

LADS, LASSES, VILLAGERS, COURT-
TIERS, &c.

Before rise of curtain the Choir describe how great perplexity reigns in this "Fair Arcadian Village." May Day has arrived, and they have no "May Queen," the reason being that votes are evenly distributed between six maidens, each of these maidens having four lads, who energetically uphold her claims to the throne. Nor will one of them swerve from his allegiance by deserting to another maiden's banner, and thus solve the dilemma by creating a majority.

AFTER CHOIR SONG, CURTAIN UP.

Village Green discovered. Big May-pole beautifully decorated in centre, round which a number of children or young girls are dancing. They are dressed alternately in pink and white, the May-

pole being carried out in the same colours, with pink and white streamers; those who are dressed in white holding the pink streamers, those in pink the white ones.

L. is a raised platform on which is the May Queen's throne, also beautifully decorated with May. At the foot of this throne are the six claimants, all dressed in white. On the throne rest the crown and sceptre and the regal robe. (N.B. —This would look well in cloth of silver.) Stationed at the back of the throne is the Old Villager, who has the privilege of crowning the May Queen. (This old villager should be picturesquely dressed in some loose robe—might be white—Druidical fashion.)

Villagers, men, women, girls, and boys grouped about stage, all in sixteenth-century costume.

While Maypole Dance is proceeding, all on stage sing MAY SONG.

OPENING CHORUS.

Boisterous lads and beauteous lasses,
Come and sport ye while ye may,
Gather where the daisied grass is,
Dance ye while the fiddlers play;

Each one take each one's adorer,
Let there none a partner lack;
Polypheme shall have his Flora,
Every Jill shall have her Jack.

SOLO.

Take no heed of morrow,
Cast all grief away;
Let no thought of sorrow
Cross your minds this day.
Let laughter ring,
And dance and sing
In praise of Spring.
'Tis May, 'tis May.

CHORUS—MAYPOLE DANCE.

Round the Maypole,
Round the Maypole;
Ribbons gay
In bright array
About it intertwining;
Round the Maypole,
Round the Maypole;
Youth and age combining,
Trip it till
Behind the hill
We see the sun declining.

In and out
And round about,
Dainty ribbons weaving;
Round about
And in and out,
Gay designs conceiving;
Round we go,
Heel and toe,
Merrily advancing,
Hand in hand,
A merry band,
Round the Maypole dancing.

[After song and dance.

1st Villager. Here's a to-do! The
like I've never known!

May Day, and not a Queen to grace
the throne!

[OLD VILLAGER M.C. comes
forward to C.

Villager M.C. Full eight times
have we called the roll,
And no name comes to head the
poll!

Of votes six maidens each have four.

[Indicating six CLAIMANTS.

Six CLAIMANTS advance a
few steps, curtsey, and retire.

Nor one has less, nor one has
more!

If but one lad his lady would desert
The claim of other maiden to assert,
Our task would easy be;

But none will from his sworn allegi-
ance swerve,

Or 'neath another May Queen's
banner serve.

Was ever villager in so dire a fix?
For one Queen only do we want—
not six!

LAD coming forward, leading one
of the CLAIMANTS by the hand.

Lad. I hold that this fair lass
should be elected!

2nd Lad (advancing). And I!

3rd Lad (advancing). And so do I!
Old Man. What! have those
who've had equal votes re-
jected!

Old Woman. Oh fie!

Other Lads. Oh fie!

All. Oh FIE!!

[Murmurs from ALL. LADS
draw back abashed.

OLD GAFFER BROWN comes for-
ward. He is bent double with

*age, and leans upon a stick.
He makes signs that he would
like to be heard.*

Villager M.C. Old Gaffer Brown
has some suggestion—

Let him for us decide the question.

[*ALL crowd round GAFFER
BROWN.*

Gaffer (in quavering voice). 'Tis
nigh on fifty year ago

This very day

That things with us were even so—
The first of May.

Girl. Had you no Queen?

Gaffer. Ay, lass, we'd *twenty!*

[*General astonishment.*

Tho' then, as now, the rule was *one.*

Woman. Guid sakes, old man, but
that were plenty!

Lad (one of voters, cagerly). In such
a case what could be done?

Gaffer. I'll tell you!

[*ALL draw nearer.*

We made the lasses dance a mea-
sure,

And she whose dance gave greatest
pleasure

Was crowned the Queen.

Villager M.C. (pleased). A very
good idea!

And one we'll act upon, I ween!

[*Advancing.*

Come, lasses, forward here.

[*Indicating C. CLAIMANTS ad-
vance to C. of stage.*

Your skill in dancing we would test;
The Queen she'll be who dances best.

[*General plaudits and acclama-
tions, after which the CLAIM-
ANTS at once begin a sextette.
This could be a very pretty
dance with floral effects.*

CHILDREN could at same
time resume dance round
Maypole. LADS joining in
at end, and throwing flowers
at dancers' feet.

*Chorus during dancing of sextette,
if the dance is a vocal one.*

CHORUS.

Maiden who would fain compete

To obtain the crown of May,

Who shall prove with twinkling
feet,

'Dorned with art and grace replete,
To assume her regal sway.

[*At end of dance general per-
plexity. No dancer has ex-
celled the others.*

CHORUS (*at end of dance*).

'Tis difficult in truth t'attest

Which fair maiden dances best,
Hence we ask what shall befall;

Because, you know,

We can't bestow

The May Queen's crown upon them
all.

(*After Chorus.*)

Villager M.C. Not yet can we
reach a decision!

All dance with equal grace and
rhythm.

[*Singing heard off. VILLAGERS
listen, then run to back of
stage.*

All (joyfully). The Merry An-
drews!

*A small donkey cart decked with
parti-coloured ribbons comes
on stage, driven by a man in
jester's garb. He is accom-
panied by a young GIRL, also*

in motley garments. JESTER jumps out of cart, and hands out his companion. The donkey is led away by one of the village LADS.

All (to JESTER). A song! a song! sing us a song!

Jester. Good folk, who told you we could sing?

Lad. A Jester can do anything!

Jester (sadly). You're right; he must; it is his calling,

*And woe betide if there's a falling
In quip or crank or jester's wit.
What if he's sad! None care a bit!
He his sorrows perforce must bury,
And set to making others merry!*

*Girl (reprovingly). What, wouldst prate there with gloomy face,
And mar the joy of this fair place?
Hush, Crimp (playfully touching him with wand), and with our song proceed.*

Jester (bowing). Begin, fair lady.

Girl. Nay, thine the lead.

[GIRL takes up tambourine. Duet, JESTER and GIRL. This song must be very pretty, and have a bright and catchy refrain, at which dancing steps for JESTER and GIRL can be introduced. The whole to end in a very lively dance.]

DUET—JESTER AND GIRL.

*Jester. Good folk, we'll interest you
With the latest quip and quiddity—*

*Girl. We'll sing a ballad, lullaby,
a serenade, or hymn.*

*Jester. We've tales of kindliness,
too,
Or larded with acidity;*

*Both. In fact, you'll find we've
every kind of humour to your
whim.*

Jester. We'll ask you a conundrum, and——

Girl. We'll dance a jig or sara-band;

Jester. Our stock is large of persiflage and jocund jocularity.

Girl. We've entertainment to desire

To set your heads and hearts on fire.

*Both. To make you shake, and
quail, and quake,
Or ache with sheer hilarity.*

Refrain.

Sing hey! down derry-derry-derry-derry-down

*For the maiden gay and merry, and
the melancholy clown:*

*For the melodies we sing you,
For the humour that we bring
you,*

*For your volunt'ry donations from
a copper to a crown.*

Sing hey! down derry-derry-derry-derry-down.

*Jester. If maiden you're pursuing
And her heart is not come-at-able——*

*Girl (offering ballad). A ballad buy
and straightway hie*

The maiden coy to seek;

*Jester. 'Twill aid you in your
wooing*

(If your tempers are compatible),

*Both. She'll straight be led to
church and wed
To you within a week.*

Jester. Or should it happen you may be——

Girl. At enmity with somebody,

Jester. We've jipes and japes of varied shapes to drive them quite hysterical.

Girl. For friends whom you are partial to——

Jester. We've quips and cranks to offer you,

Both. Which when once heard, upon my word, dissensions are chimerical.

[Repeat refrain. Dance.]

Towards end of dance LADS come from their posts behind their respective nominees. ALL of one accord go to GIRL (the disguised Princess of Arcadia).

Loud applause. ALL repeat refrain.

Lads. A May Queen—she is here !

1st Claim. (to 1ST LAD). What ! would you thus our claims reject,

And crown a beggar maid ?

1st Lad. We her unanimously elect !

2nd Lad. To her beauty

Is our duty

And our homage paid.

Villager M.C. The throne she's won by song and dancing,

Her bird-like notes, her steps entrancing.

Gaffer (in quavering voice). All honour to the Queen of May,

None can her right to reign gainsay !

Villager M.C. So list we all beneath her banner,

[Indicating CLAIMANTS.]

And you shall be her Maids of Honour.

[GIRLS reluctantly precede QUEEN to throne in groups of three. At foot of throne they divide, remaining three on each side. Maids of honour robe her. (This must be a loose robe, which can be slipped on like a cloak.) VILLAGER M.C. crowns her. She sits on throne. JESTER throws himself at her feet. Business of various kinds to be arranged.]

(General chorus during above, ALL HAIL.)

ALL HAIL CHORUS.

Omnes. Hail ! Hail !! Hail !!!

To thou who hast chosen been.

Hail ! All Hail !!

To thee, our beauteous Queen.

Bring the crown of blushing roses,

Place it on her comely brow ;

Let her throne be strewn with posies,

All allegiance to her vow.

[ALL kneeling.]

We—oh ! most gracious Queen,

Humbly our homage pay,

To thee we bend the knee

And own thy regal sway,

Thou who hast chosen been

Queen of the May !

SONG.—“Queen of the May.”

Girl. No ancestors of Royal blood,

No pedigree of long descent,

Extending far beyond the Flood

With high repute armipotent ;

No palaces of stately mien,

No battlemented castle high,

No regal robes, no jewelled sheen,
Are mine—and yet a Queen am I.

Refrain.

Queen of the May,
Queen of the May,
Whom all obey in the meadow and
grove ;
Queen of the May,
Queen for a day,
Wielding my sway amid laughter
and love.

II.

A simple maiden lowly born
Was I, when I began my reign,
And you will find to-morrow morn
In me a lowly maid again.
While thus placed high among the
great
Imbued with regal state I've been,
I do not hesitate to state
It's very nice to be a Queen.

Refrain.

Queen of the May,
Queen of the May,
Whom all obey in the meadow and
grove ;
Queen of the May,
Queen for a day,
Wielding my sway amid laughter
and love.

[ALL repeat chorus—"Wield-
ing her sway," &c. ; finishing
with short dance. Sud-
denly a bugle note is heard.
VILLAGERS stop their dance.
Some go to back of stage.

*Enter in great haste the LORD
CHAMBERLAIN, followed by two
pages and several knights in*

*armour, or COURTIERs of the
period. (Note. — Elizabethan
dress.) KNIGHTS bow pro-
foundly to PRINCESS ; then
station themselves at back of
throne, whilst LORD CHAMBER-
LAIN prostrates himself at the
PRINCESS's feet and kisses her
hand. JESTER hides behind
the QUEEN's chair, bobbing up
his head every now and again.
General surprise of VILLAGERS,
who shrink back amazed, the
PRINCESS being immediately
surrounded by the people of her
father's court.*

Chamberlain. At last we've found
your Royal Highness !

Princess. That you had not I'd
rather ! *[In pouting tones.*

Chamberlain. Gracious Princess,
your royal father,

At your absence protracted,
Is nigh with grief distracted.

He's been e'er since the night you left
Like one who's of his wits bereft ;
No food his lips has entered in,
Nor razor touched the royal chin,
For two whole days.

JESTER *leaning over back of*
PRINCESS's chair.

Jester. O Princess mine, I'm
sore afeard,
Your daddy must have grown a
beard !

Chamberlain (sternly to JESTER).
You, sirrah, had best hide your face,
At court you are in sad disgrace.

[JESTER *shrinks back as if hurt.*
PRINCESS *beckons him for-
ward. He kneels.*

Princess. My trustiest servant
thou,
Let none to blame thee dare,
My father shall know how,
In this wild freak
Which I did seek,
Of me thou'st taken care.

[JESTER *kisses PRINCESS'S
hand and goes back to place.*

Princess (to COURTIERs and
CHAMBERLAIN). Yet a little
longer must I stay,
And o'er this rustic court hold
sway ;

Then will I hie me home once
more
When that this simple feast is
o'er.

Jester (*laughing to CHAMBERLAIN*).
They've crown'd her Highness
Queen of May !

Chamberlain (*grandiloquently to
VILLAGERS*). Good people, in
your May Queen see,
The lov'd Princess of Arcadie !

[VILLAGERS *seem abashed, and
hold back for a second ; then
OLD GAFFER BROWN totters
forward and attempts to kiss
the PRINCESS'S hand. She
rises quickly and prevents
him, kissing him on the
cheek. This action evokes
loud cheers of "Long live
our Princess," from all.*

All. Long live our Princess !
Hooray ! hooray !! hooray !!!

[Six CLAIMANTS *retire to one
corner, abashed.*

Jester (*touching one of CLAIMANTS
with his wand*). And now you've
found your rival the Princess is,

Judge not a maid in future by the
way she dresses !

Princess (to CLAIMANTS). Come
forward, maidens, tho' I'm
Queen to-day,
Another year perhaps you'll hold
your sway !

[MAIDENS *approach and kiss
her hand.*

Princess. Once more with the
festivities proceed,
My Maids of Honour will the
dancing lead.

[*Song and dance of VILLAGERS.*

CHORUS AND GENERAL DANCE.

Come on, come on,
Now Phyllis and John
Cross over to Robin and Jane,
Ruth and Joe
To centre go,
And now you come over again ;
Now Hugh to Prue
Who bows to you
A kiss on her bestow,
Peter meet her
Then retreat a—
Gain and join the row.

Over the ground
With arms around
The waist of every maid,
Hey, ho !
Away we go !
And the fiddler lends his aid.

"ALL HAIL" CHORUS.

Omnes. Hail ! hail !! hail !!!
To thou who hast chosen been.
Hail ! All hail !!
To thee, our beauteous Queen.

Bring the crown of blushing roses,
Place it on her comely brow.
Let her throne be strewn with posies,
All allegiance to her vow.

[ALL kneeling.

We—oh! most gracious Queen,
Humbly our homage pay,
To thee we bend the knee
And own thy regal sway,
Thou who hast chosen been
Queen of the May!

After dance VILLAGERS all resume
"ALL HAIL" chorus, as two by

*two they approach, kneel at her feet
and kiss her hand. COURTIERs
remain stationed behind throne.
At end a beautiful sedan-chair is
carried in by four bearers. PRIN-
CESS is assisted into it by COUR-
TIERs and carried round stage
in procession—and off.*

GRAND CONCERTED CHORUS.

CURTAIN.

THE WOODEN SHOE

OR, ST. VALENTINE'S DAY

BY RITA STRAUSS

THE chief feature in the scenery for this play, from the manager's point of view, is the balcony, which will have to be erected against the right wing. This is illustrated in Figs. 1-3. The wing itself should be painted after the manner shown in Fig. 1, upon a flat in which a practicable door is cut fairly high up. The top

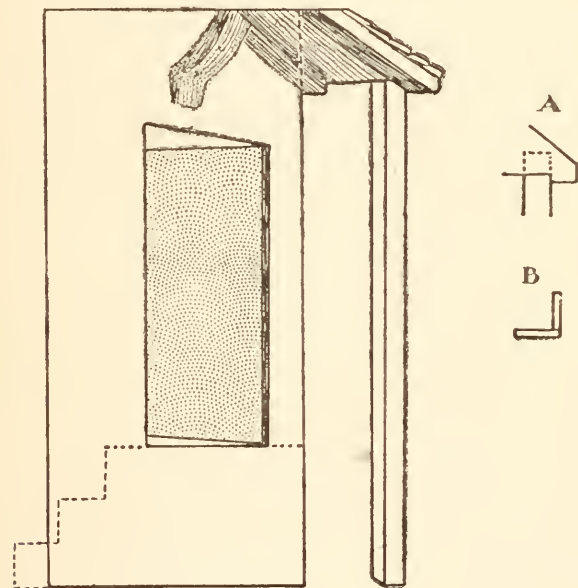


FIG. 1

of the doorway must be made in perspective, as the flat will be placed at an angle of about 45° to the back-cloth. The balcony, the position of which is indicated by the dotted lines, is placed beneath the overhanging roof, which is made of cardboard and appears to be supported by a wooden pillar, constructed in reality of two laths placed at right angles, as at B, and fastened to the back of the roof, as at A.

The steps ascending to the balcony are made with three wooden boxes of varying heights, as shown at B, Fig. 2. These are battened together, the floor of the balcony resting upon the highest step and a box of similar dimensions, D. The balcony itself is composed of

several lengths of wood battened together, A, and sufficiently strong to support at least one person. At the point marked C a notch must be cut out for a purpose which will be explained later.

For the railing of the balcony two pieces of wood must be notched at regular intervals, A, Fig. 3, square or turned banisters, B, being fitted into them and placed in position, as shown at K. The post, C, at the foot of the stairs must be made of two pieces of wood at right angles, in the manner already described, to represent a square post; whilst the larger post, E, must be treated in the same way, one of the strips being inserted in the notch already made in the balcony. A rail, G, can be joined to these posts with irons, as at L; whilst a back-piece at K should

be painted to represent the continuation of the balcony. Nothing now remains to be done but to paint the wood with a dark oak-stain and cover the steps and the

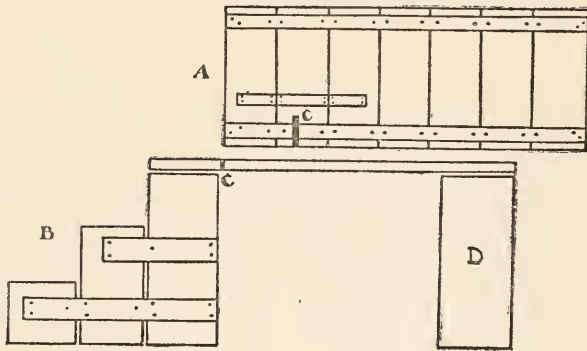


FIG. 2

portion H below the balcony with canvas painted to resemble broken brickwork and plaster.

The other wing should be painted like the flat illustrated in "The Siege of Calais,"

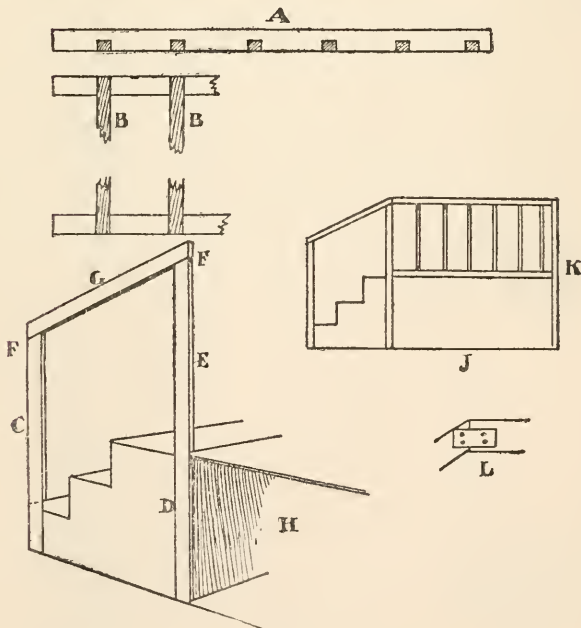


FIG. 3

Fig. 3, in place of the hanging sign there depicted, a large Wooden Shoe being suspended from the roof. The back-cloth must have a mountain landscape, with snow-covered peaks in the far distance.



FIG. 4



FIG. 5



FIG. 6



FIG. 7

COSTUMES

Maître Renaud.—The old Burgomaster, who must be made up to resemble a corpulent and somewhat lame old man, can be dressed in a long coat, have a red or flowered waistcoat, and wear a three-cornered hat upon his head.

Gaston Renaud.—A typical costume for the young Savoyard is shown in Fig. 4. It consists of a long white coat over a red waistcoat, white breeches, and brown or black leggings. The peculiarly shaped hat is made of felt, and so arranged that the large flap behind can be bent down to cover the whole of the neck.

Pierre.—This character requires no especial dress, the actor being attired simply in shirt-sleeves and short breeches, with a large white apron.

The Countess.—This lady should present a very stately appearance, and be dressed in black or grey, with powdered hair and large curls. Her costume should be founded upon that of a grand lady of the early nineteenth century.

Marie—the countess's maid—would require a neat and dainty travelling costume as befitting the servant of so great a lady. Her dress may be modelled upon that of her mistress, but should, of course, be very much simpler.

Mère Babette.—The innkeeper's wife, made up to appear stout and comely, should be dressed in a plain cotton frock with a large white apron.

Lizette.—The costume illustrated in Fig. 5 is typically Savoyard. It consists of a dark bodice with low neck, and a skirt with a wide embroidered panel. Two long ribbons hang to her knees, that on the right passing over the shoulder, whilst that on the left is tacked to her bodice, as shown in the picture. The peculiar head-dress is made of lace pinned to the hair, and with modifications of material, will be suitable for the remaining female characters.

The village girls depicted in Fig. 6 should be dressed in loose-sleeved bodices, outside which are worn gaily coloured stays covered with velvet. The hair should be parted in the middle, and hang down the back in two pig-tails.

The remaining village lads can be dressed after the fashion shown in Fig. 7, with full shirts, knee-breeches, and thick stockings.

THE WOODEN SHOE

OR, ST. VALENTINE'S DAY

CHARACTERS.

MAÎTRE RENAUD, *the Burgomaster.*

GASTON RENAUD, *his son.*

PIERRE, *an Innkeeper.*

MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BONNE-
MARCHE.

MARIE, *her maid.*

MÈRE BABETTE, *Pierre's wife.*

LIZETTE.

SCENE.—*A Village in Savoy.*

Prctty Alpine view on back-cloth of mountains extending in the distance. L., old-fashioned inn, which bears for sign a wooden shoe, with "Le Sabot" painted in large characters underneath. R., a villa with verandah in front, from which steps lead to stage. Before rise of curtain, CHORUS.*

St. Valentine, the patron of true lovers,
To you each year a day is set apart,
When earnest youth to blushing maid discovers
The secret erstwhile hidden in his heart.

Curtain rises on bright village scene. Mine host standing at inn door; two or three of the elder VILLAGERS sitting at tables, drinking. YOUTHS and MAIDENS in couples trip on stage. ALL very merry. (Girls in regular Savoyard costumes — chemisette, stiff linen caps, &c. N.B.—If the latter are found unbecoming to the majority, they could be limited to three or

four of the girls, but a few are necessary to emphasise the "Savoyard" character and add realism to the scene.)

On Valentine's Day,
On Valentine's Day
We are merry and gay,
Happily frolicking, merrily rollick-
ing,

Chasing all sadness and care away.
For each measure of sorrow
Is left for the morrow,
And happiness, gladness, and mirth
hold sway
On Valentine's Day, on Valentine's
Day.

Youths. Softly in fair maiden's ear
Words of love we breathe;
Hearts beating with doubt and fear
Lest rebuff we receive

Girls. With downcast eyes and
blushing cheeks
Each her secret confesses;
Granting her swain the boon he seeks
As her shy answer "Yes" is.

[*Each MAID pairs off with LAD.*

All. On Valentine's Day,
On Valentine's Day
We are merry and gay;
Sweet treasures seeking,
Heart to heart speaking,
Chasing all doubt and fear away.
No thought of morrow,
Nor trouble nor sorrow
O'ershadows our hearts, but
Love holds sway
On Valentine's Day, on Valentine's
Day!

Enter MÈRE BABETTE, a very stout Savoy peasant woman, from inn.

Mère Babette (singing and shaking a wooden spoon at them). What a noise! what a clatter!

You'll drive me mad with all your chatter.

[ALL retreat towards R., leaving her the C. of stage.]

Can you do naught but your time squander

When you should be working yonder?

Youths. Mère Babette, remember, pray,

To-day is St. Valentine's Day.

Mère Babette (mollified—speaking interrogatively). St. Valentine's Day?

All. Yes.

Mère Babette. I had forgotten. Bless me, children, enjoy yourselves in your own fashion; 'tis not for Mère Babette to interfere. Why, all the great events of my life happened on St. Valentine's Day!

All (interested). Did they, Mère Babette?

Mère Babette. Yes. To begin with, I came into the world on Valentine's Day, baked my first loaf—

Pierre (interrupting). And married me on Valentine's Day.

Mère Babette. That, Pierre, is the one and only mistake St. Valentine caused me to make.

All. Ha! ha! ha!

Mère Babette. I spoke my first word on Valentine's Day.

Pierre. And you've never stopped speaking since!

All. Ha! ha! ha!

[Great crash heard in inn.]

Mère Babette. What's that? That clumsy Lizette again, I'll be bound!

[Rushes into house; brings out

LIZETTE, a very pretty girl in peasant's dress, by the arm.

Mère Babette. My best crockery this time! It is unpardonable! What have you to say for yourself, méchante?

Lizette. Dear mother, I could not help it!

Mère Babette. Could not help it! You were dreaming again, I suppose?

Lizette (puts her arms round her neck). Be not cross with me, little mother. I try—oh so hard!—to be a good little housewife; but work only wearies me, and I long to be out in the fields with the birds and the flowers and the trees!

SONG.

I cannot cook, I cannot sew,
I cannot dust or make a bed,
I cannot scrub, for don't you know,
I dream the livelong day instead!
Sometimes in palaces I roam,
Sometimes in stately castles fair;
Then wake to find myself at home—
The castles were châteaux-en-l'air.

Ah!

Refrain.

Dreaming in the gloaming,
Dreaming all the day;
In realms of fancy roaming,
Where happiness holds sway.
Dreaming in the twilight,
Dreaming in the dawn,
Dreaming, always dreaming,
From eve till morn.

2nd Verse.

I try so hard to do my best
To be a useful little maid,

And cook and sew and all the rest,
But 'tis no use, I am afraid !
For thoughts will come of other things,
To shake them off I try in vain ;
I'm born aloft on Fancy's wings
To realms of dreamland once again.

Ah !

Refrain.

Dreaming in the gloaming,
Dreaming all the day ;
In realms of fancy roaming,
Where happiness holds sway.
Dreaming in the twilight,
Dreaming in the dawn,
Dreaming, always dreaming,
From eve till morn.

[*During last verse of song*
GASTON RENAUD, a very
handsome youth, the Burgo-
master's son, appears on ver-
andah—watches LIZETTE.

Mère Babette. Ah well, child, I
cannot be angry with you for long !
Go quick and finish your work !

Youth. Is not Lizette coming to
the fair ?

Girl. Bid your sweetheart take
you, Lizette.

Lizette. Sweetheart ! I have no
sweetheart !

Girl. Ah, little hypocrite, try not
to persuade us that you must fain
braid St. Catherine's tresses ! What
about Monsieur Gaston ?

Youth. Ay, what about Monsieur
Gaston, the Burgomaster's son ?

Mère Babette (*angrily*). Fill not the
child's head with such rubbish !
The Burgomaster's son, indeed !
As if he would look at the likes of
her ! Why, Monsieur Gaston will
wed some fine, *chic*, Parisian lady !

Be off, all of you. Lizette, come,
finish your work.

[*ALL go off dancing and sing-
ing refrain of Valentine song.*
Exit MÈRE BABETTE to inn.
LIZETTE goes disconsolately
to garden-seat ; sits on it, her
arm hanging listlessly over
back.

Lizette. Yes, it is true, Gaston will
wed some fine Paris lady who will
put on airs, and never look at a
poor little country mouse like me.

GASTON descends verandah steps,
comes up behind her, puts
both hands over her eyes.

Gaston. Guess who it is ?

Lizette. Monsieur Gaston.

Gaston. "Monsieur" Gaston !
Why so formal, Lizette ?

Lizette. Because, Monsieur, it is
only right ! You are a gentleman,
and I—I am only a little peasant
girl ! [*Very sadly.*

Gaston. Yes, only a little peasant
girl ; but the girl I love with all my
heart !

SONG.—"*Will you be my Valentine ?*"

Gaston.

Little girl, a story I would tell thee—
'Tis a story for thine ears alone ;
One that Cupid's barbéd shafts compel me
With faltering lips and beating heart to own.
'Tis of love within my heart,
Love for thee, my own sweetheart.

Refrain.

Little girl, I love thee very dearly !
Little girl, oh, say wilt thou be mine ?
Little girl, I ask this question merely,
Wilt thou be my Valentine ?
Wilt thou be my Valentine ?

2nd Verse.

Little girl, but tell me that you love me,
Then all earthly happiness is mine,
Bright will be the firmament above me,
Peace and joy on me will ever shine;
For the sunshine of thy love
Would be a gift from Heav'n above.

Refrain.

Little girl, I love thee very dearly!
Little girl, oh, say wilt thou be mine?
Little girl, I ask this question merely,
Wilt thou be my Valentine?
Wilt thou be my Valentine?

[They embrace at end of song.]

YOUTHS and MAIDENS come
dancing on.

Youth *(seeing them — merrily)*.
O-h-h!

Girl. What did we say?

Gaston. You were quite right.
Lizette is my Valentine.

BURGOMASTER, *a very stout, choleric looking man, hobbles down verandah with stick; he is slightly lame.*

Burgomaster. Wh—wh—what—
what—what! Did I hear aright?
What joke is this, sir? Can't you
leave the village folk to enjoy their
revels without making fools of them?

[GASTON and LIZETTE afraid at first; then GASTON half pulls LIZETTE towards his father—both quaking.]

Gaston. Lizette has promised to
be my wife.

Burgomaster. To be your—*(Very angry.)* Sacré mille tonnières! What
do you mean, sir? What do you
mean—what do you mean?

Gaston. We are going to be
married.

Burgomaster. Going to be married,
are you! We'll soon see to that! My
son, Gaston Renaud, marry an inn-
keeper's daughter—pish, sir, pish!

MÈRE BABETTE *enters.*

Here, old woman, take your daughter
to her room and lock her up, do
you hear?

Mère Babette. Lock Lizette up!
Why?

Burgomaster. Because I tell you.
Do you dare to question me—ME,
the Burgomaster! Go—go, I say!

[Stamps his foot; MÈRE BABETTE hurries out with LIZETTE.]

Gaston *(supplicatingly)*. Father!

Burgomaster. You, sir, leave my
presence!

Gaston. But——

Burgomaster. Do you hear——

Gaston. But understand this, I
WILL marry Lizette!

[Stamps off in high dudgeon.]

Burgomaster. Well I never! Gas-
ton defying me—me, his father! not
only his father, but the Burgo-
master! I won't have it! I say, I
won't have it—I won't have it, I
won't have it!

Girl *(advances)*. Won't have what,
Mr. Burgomaster?

Burgomaster. Your cheek, Miss!
Oh, I didn't mean that; it's a very
pretty one. *(Kisses her on cheek.)* I
say I won't be defied, not even by my
own son! I'm the Burgomaster.

SONG.

Burgomaster.

Oh, I am not

A great despot,

Like some one I could name;

But I expect

My little set

T'obey me all the same.

If any one from anywhere

To honour me should fail,

Or should to disobey me dare,

I'd lock him in the jail.

Refrain.

Oh, I'm the Burgomaster,

I'm the Burgomaster !

If I'd my way—from day to day

I'd make the world go faster.

I'm the Burgomaster, I'm the Burgomaster !

And I will show

How to make things go

Whilst I'm the Burgomaster.

[*Topical verses may be added.*]

MÈRE BABETTE comes out of inn,

LIZETTE clinging to her, an

apron over her eyes, crying.

Burgomaster (angrily). Did I not tell you to lock the girl in her room ?

Mère Babette. Yes, Mr. Burgomaster.

Burgomaster. Then why have you not done so ?

Mère Babette. Because I have something to say to you, Mr. Burgomaster.

Burgomaster. Something to say to me !—to me ! Don't attempt to argue with me, because I won't listen. I never allow any one to argue but myself.

[*During this GASTON appears on verandah. Kisses hand and waves to LIZETTE behind BURGOMASTER'S back. LIZETTE responds by drying her eyes, waving her hand also. BURGOMASTER turns round—sees them.*]

Burgomaster. Wh-wh-wh-what is this ?

[GASTON goes quickly into house—LIZETTE hides behind MÈRE BABETTE.]

Burgomaster. Defied again by my own son—my son who could never say “bo” to a goose till to-day. What am I saying, what am I saying—my son who could never say “bo” to a—to a—(*To GIRLS around.*) Can't some one help me out ?

Girl. Burgomaster.

Burgomaster. Oh, you insolent wench ! (*Threatens her ; she retires frightened, to MÈRE BABETTE.*) Well, woman, what have you to tell me ?

Mère Babette. It is about Lizette.

Burgomaster. I've heard quite enough about Lizette for one day.

[*About to go—MÈRE BABETTE detains him.*]

Mère Babette. O sir, listen ! Listen, all of you ! I have kept it secret for so many years, but now, for the child's sake, I must make it known—Lizette is not my daughter.

[*General astonishment.*]

All. Lizette not your daughter !

[GASTON, who has again appeared on verandah, comes down steps, stays at back, listening.]

Burgomaster. What difference does that make ? She's a peasant girl all the same.

Mère Babette. Oh no, Monsieur, she is not ! [PIERRE advances.]

Pierre. Our little Lizette is a fine lady.

Lizette. A fine lady ? I—

Mère Babette. Yes. Listen, Mr. Burgomaster. One cold winter's

night, eighteen years ago, Pierre and I were just retiring to rest, when we heard a knock at the door. We thought it was the wind at first, as no one ever came at so late an hour, so we paid no attention, but the knock was repeated. Pierre went down—opened the door—and there entered——

All (breathlessly). Yes!

Mère Babette. A most beautiful lady. She looked like a Princess. She was wan and ill, and shivering with cold. We made her come and warm herself at the fire. She was nursing a little baby in her arms. That baby was——

Gaston (excitedly, advancing). Lizette!

Mère Babette. Yes, Lizette. When she had warmed herself, I took her to her room and left her. The next morning she had gone—but Lizette was left behind!

Lizette. Oh, what a cruel mother to leave me thus!

Mère Babette. Speak not so rashly, child. A note was pinned to your pillow. It said that her husband—your father—had just died, and that you were left the heiress of his estates.

Burgomaster. An heiress!

Mère Babette. Yes, an heiress.

All. An heiress—Lizette!

Mère Babette. Yes.

Girl. Then why did her mother leave her?

Mère Babette. Because the father's people thought they should have had the money, and were doing their best to get hold of the child. She begged us to look after Lizette

until she should come and claim her—but we have not heard of her since.

Burgomaster (grunting). A likely story!

Pierre. It is true, sir, every word of it!

Gaston (puts his arm round LIZETTE). My poor little Lizette!

Burgomaster (in loud tone). Gaston! (GASTON starts—releases LIZETTE.) None of that, sir. The truth of this story has yet to be proved. (To MÈRE BABETTE.) Would you recognise this lady if you saw her again?

Mère Babette. She took from here a token—a wooden shoe that has been in our family for generations. There is its fellow. (Pointing to sign.) Pierre put it up the day after she left; it has been there ever since.

Burgomaster. So you are waiting every day for some fine lady to come and claim Lizette!

[LIZETTE rushes into MÈRE BABETTE'S arms.

Mère Babette. Oh no, sir. I pray the day may never come—only I must see justice done to the child.

Burgomaster. If you mean you would like her to marry my son—never! At any rate—if there be any truth in your story—not until it is proved. I've said it; and what I've said, I've said! I'm the Burgomaster!

[ALL sing refrain of "I'm the Burgomaster!" as he stamps off and enters house by verandah. The GIRLS crowd round MÈRE BABETTE and LIZETTE.

Girl. To think of it! Our Lizette is a fine lady all the time!

2nd Girl. And she will go to Paris and wear pretty frocks!

3rd Girl. And forget all about her friends.

Lizette. Never! I shall never leave you, never! I love you all too much! But isn't it puzzling, girls? I don't even know who I am. I thought I was Lizette a few minutes ago, and now I may be any one. How strange it all seems!

SONG.

Lizette. It's all so very strange to me—
How I wonder, how I wonder
Who this little girl can be!
Am I a high-born lady,
Or am I a village maid?
I really can't guess,
And I must confess
That to think of it I'm afraid.

Refrain.

I may be a lady, a perfect grande dame,
With servants to answer my call.
Oh dear, it is puzzling to know who I am!
Perhaps I am no one at all!
Fine horses and carriages I may possess,
The carriages blazoned with bold coronet.
I may be a Duchess or Royal Princess—
I may be no other than plain Lizette!

Chorus.

All. She may be a lady, a perfect grande dame,
With servants to answer her call.
Oh dear, it is puzzling to know who she is!
Perhaps she is no one at all!
Fine horses and carriages she may possess,
The carriages blazoned with bold coronet.
She may be a Duchess or Royal Princess—
She may be no other than plain Lizette!

Gaston. She will always be my little Lizette.

[GASTON puts his arm round
LIZETTE. They go into inn.

Lad (who is at back of stage). I say, look here, what's this?

[2ND LAD goes to back.

2nd Lad. It looks like a lot of walking boxes.

1st Lad. Why, it's quite the prettiest and daintiest little maiden you ever saw—but she seems to be trying to carry all her luggage on her back.

[ALL go to back and watch.

(Note. — They must not crowd, and so spoil MARIE'S entrance.)

2nd Lad. Let's go and help her.

They go off and re-enter, each laden with about three huge hat-boxes. People on stage separate to sides, leaving C. clear. MARIE comes down centre, with LAD on either side. MARIE is all of a flutter, and comes down very quickly.

Marie (speaking with French accent). Oh, what a too a-bominable place!

1st Lad. What's the matter, Mademoiselle?

Marie. You may well ask what is the matter! I come from Paris with my mistress, Madame la Comtesse de Villemarche—the diligence upsets—we are left in the road—with our boxes. It was a wonder we were not killed. *Voilà tout!* (To 1ST LAD, who nearly drops box.) Ah! my beautiful Paris hat—be careful.

2nd Lad (advances). Give it to me, Mademoiselle. [She does so.

Marie. Be very careful with it; it cost me twenty francs.

Girl (shocked). Twenty francs!

Marie (mimicking). Yes, t-w-e-n-t-y francs! (Takes it out of box.) C'est chic, n'est ce pas?

SONG.

Marie (with six girls for action).

Ze love of dress,
You must confess,

Is vooman's ruling passion.

Girls. Passion — passion — woman's
ruling passion !

Marie. And her last sou
She'd give to you

To be just in ze fashion !

Girls. Fashion—fashion—to be just in
ze fashion !

Marie. And oh, how she is chic,
Zis Paris de-mois-elle !
Her clothes she wear
With a dainty air,
None can say no to zat—

She is chic—ah, chic ! ah, chic ! !
Has savoir-faire as well, ah !
And nought she care, so long she wear
A dainty Paris 'at ! !

[*Chorus—repeat refrain.*

She loves ze beaux
Ever-ee one know,
Zis little maid from Paree !

Chorus. Paree—Paree—little maid from
Paree !

Marie. Not bows you wear
In dress or hair,
But beaux that you can marry !

Chorus. Marry — marry — beaux that
you can marry !

Marie. And oh, how she do flirt,
Zis Paris demoiselle !
She break ze 'eart
Of her sweetheart

When she tell him to go !
She do flirt—flirt—flirt,
As every one can tell, oh !
And oh, shocking !
She have two string
To every single bow !

[*Repeat business.*

Burgomaster (comes out on veranda). Who is this young person ?

Marie. Femme - de - chambre. of

Madame la Comtesse de Ville-
marche. Monsieur, come quick
and help her.

Burgomaster (hobbles down steps).
A countess ! help a countess ! What
can I do, my dear ? I'm the Burgo-
master.

Marie (curtseying). Please, Mon-
sieur, to send a carriage to meet
madame with me. We have had a
little accident—the diligence broke
down.

Burgomaster. I will go and fetch
her myself and bring her here. Ah,
I never thought I should entertain
a countess whilst I was Burgo-
master. [*Exit.*

Re-enter GASTON and LIZETTE.
MÈRE BABETTE comes after
them.

Mère Babette. Lizette, you must
not be seen with Monsieur Gaston ;
I am so afraid of the Burgo-
master.

Marie. Afraid of that strange old
man ! He, he, he ! Comme c'est
drôle ! (*Looking off.*) But here he
comes with Madame la Comtesse.

Enter BURGOMASTER. A very
stately lady leaning on his arm.
She seems pale and tired.
MARIE goes to her.

Comtesse. Thank you, Monsieur ;
I will go in and rest. What a pretty
place ! (*Catches sight of signboard*
of inn.) What's that ? Do my eyes
deceive me ? (*Excitedly.*) No, there's
the wooden shoe ; it is the—it is—
the very inn where I left my child
eighteen years ago. Ah ! (*Half*
faints ; MÈRE BABETTE rushes to

support her.) The Wooden Shoe! My bag, Marie, quick! Open it. (MARIE *does so; takes out wooden shoe.* COMTESSE *takes it from her.*) See, its fellow! Look inside and read the inscription.

Mère Babette. My shoe! Then you are—the lady who left your child here eighteen years ago?

Comtesse. I am! I was ill for months afterwards with brain-fever, and forgot the very name of the place, and the people with whom I had left her. All I had for guide was this wooden shoe. Tell me, my daughter, is she alive?

[GASTON *leads* LIZETTE *forward.* MÈRE BABETTE *takes her to* COMTESSE.]

Mère Babette. Madame, she is here!

Comtesse. My long lost child! I have found you at last!

[*They embrace.*]

Burgomaster. There, see what a wonderful man I am! If it hadn't been for me you would never have found your daughter!

Comtesse (to LIZETTE). Tomorrow, my darling, you will come with me to Paris.

Lizette. Mother, do not take me away from this little village—I love it so. Besides, I could not leave Gaston.

Comtesse. Who is Gaston?

Lizette. My sweetheart.

[GASTON *advances.*]

Burgomaster (*conceitedly*). And my son, Madame. I'm the Burgomaster!

Comtesse. But a Burgomaster's

son is not good enough for my daughter!

Burgomaster. He would have been too good for Lizette, the peasant girl, and yet he offered her his hand and heart.

Comtesse. Is that so, Lizette?

Lizette. It is; and, mother, I love Gaston.

Gaston. And I love Lizette.

Comtesse (*giving a hand to each*). Well, my children, I'll not interfere with your happiness. Have your wish, Lizette. We'll stay here until after the wedding, and we'll have the wedding breakfast at "The Wooden Shoe."

All (*cheer*). Vive Madame la Comtesse! Vive! Vive!

SONG.

Lizette. Oh, I am a lady,
A perfect grande dame,
With servants to answer my call!
I'm no longer puzzled to know who I
am,
Nor think I am no one at all!
Fine horses and carriages I will possess,
The carriages blazoned with bold coronet;
For my mother is a high-born countess,
And I am no longer just plain Lizette.

All. Oh, she is a lady,
A perfect grande dame,
With servants to answer her call!
She's no longer puzzled to know who
she is,
She's no longer no one at all.
Fine horses and carriages she will possess,
The carriages blazoned with bold coronet;
For her mother is a high-born Princess,
And she is no longer just plain Lizette!

CURTAIN.

